

THE
MACARONI.

A
COMEDY.

As it is performed at the
THEATRE-ROYAL.

IN
YORK.

BELFAST:

Printed by JAMES MAGEE, at the BIBLE and
CROWN, in BRIDGE-STREET.

M,DCC,LXXIV.

THE

MAGAZINE

OF THE

ROYAL

NAVY

AND

ARMY

OF GREAT BRITAIN

WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT

THIS TRIFLE

IS HUMBLY INSCRIBED

TO

JEREMIAH NORRIS, ESQ.

OF THE

CITY OF NORWICH,

BY THE

YORK,
April 12, 1773.

AUTHOR.

THE Author thinks he should be deficient in duty, if he did not thus warmly express his gratitude to his friends for their kind patronage, and to the public, for the very favourable reception the piece met with in representation. Relying upon a continuation of their good nature, he now ventures to submit it to their perusal; humbly hoping they will consider it as the first essay of one whose utmost ambition was to amuse without offending.

PROLOGUE.

P R O L O G U E.

Written and spoken by Mr. CRESSWICK.

Enters speaking to the AUTHOR as behind the Scenes

Don't be alarm'd, my friend! you need not be in fear,
None but good natur'd folks I'm positive are here.

[Coming forward to the audience.]

To plead a brother's cause, who trembling stands behind,
A volunteer I come — and beg you will be kind
To this his first begotten — shew your fostering care,
And let his tender bantling in your favours share.
“ In arts perfection is the growth of years,
“ The bud must open, 'ere the flowers appears.”
Each little fault or blemish pass regardless by,
But mark each glimpse of merit with approving eye.
Tho' yet a raw unpractis'd novice he appear,
Let but your generous plaudits dissipate his fear,
To bolder heights hereafter he may wing his flight,
And give you then much greater pleasure and delight:
For applause you all know's the life of endeavour,
Without it in vain is our study and labour.
To each critic I sue — on each fair one rely,
Many looks of indulgence methinks I espy.
As a sketch of his plan — his attempt is to shew
The nice Fop of the age, and the Libertin: too,
Their vices and follies hold up to derision,
That feeling its force they may shew their contrition.
Virtue and beauty's charms, he likewise sets to view,
All-powerful charms, such as shou'd every heart subdue.
From nature's wide and ample field his plan he draws,
And hopes to please you all by her unerring laws.
Then with candour attend — let no prejudice rise,
But shew yourselves pleas'd both with hands and with eyes.

The Writers of the two following PROLOGUES, it is hoped, will excuse their not being spoken, as the foregoing one was written, for that purpose, prior to their being received.

PROLOGUE I.

WHEN Folly, with dame fashion's forces join'd,
Usurp'd inglorious empire o'er mankind;
When Virtue sunk beneath the iron-hand
Of Vice, who stalk'd gigantick thro' the land,
Oft has Thalia, fir'd with generous rage,
Lash'd the proud tyrants, on th' instructive Stage,
Unmask'd their every art, then beaullong burl'd
From their high thrones those sovereigns of our world;
Bid injur'd Reason her lost rights again
Resume, and of the passions take the rein;
Whilst sickle Fashion own'd her ruling band,
And fix'd the mode, or alter'd, at her dread command.

'Twas she who bid our trembling bard engage
To last the folly of this scribbling age:

"H———" she cry'd "oft has a stuttering train

"Of empty beings, scarce the shades of men!

"Prowl'd my laughter as they mov'd along,

"Each to the music of his own soft tongue;

"The task be thine to seize the motley crew,

"And drag them forth expos'd to public view:

"Haste—can thy eye mistake 'em?—No—on high

"Their fronts arise, and seem to prop the sky:

"Whilst all their wit, and sense, and judgment join'd,

"In one large roll, hangs pendant from behind:

"Like the sweet warblers of Italian strains,

"Unknown to Love's soft pleasures and his pains;

"When Beauty courts them with alluring eye,

"Fleet as the stag before the bounds they fly;

"When Britain calls her valiant sons to arms,

"Their milky souls no martial ardour warms,

"For all their courage lodges in the beel,

"And fear's the only passion they can feel;

"Save that, in which they every hour employ,

"(Narcissus-like)—the self-admiring joy.

"Haste,

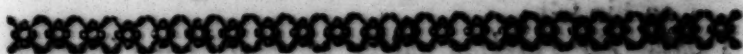
PROLOGUE.

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"Haste—seize the dear insipids—bravely dare
 "To wage with Folly and with Fashion war:
 "These, these are comic satyr's noblest game."
 She cea'd—and joyn'd fair Agrippa's train.

Our Bard, obedient to the high command,
 The feeble effort of his trembling hand
 This night presents. O deign, ye generous fair,
 With souls propitious to reward his care;
 Ye that reside in our Theatric skies,
 Higher than e'er advent'rous muse durst rise,
 Ye in the clouds—and ye who lowly sit,
 Judges supreme of poetry and wit,
 Kindly receiv't—He asks no doubtful name,
 Bright in the annals of eternal fame;
 Kindly receiv't—nor to id' infernal gloom
 Of Pluto's realms his infant offspring doom:
 But judge with candour each observing friend,
 "And spare your censure, where you can't commend!"

W. P.



PROLOGUE II.

Enters drunk, and speaking to the Author.

H—no more—I'll do't—this once I'll strive
 To obtain your pardon—or obtain—reprieve;
 That done—I'll never—(trust me when I swear)—
 Prove dupe to you—or any other play'r.

[Comes forward]

Bold was the man that first engag'd in fight;
 Far bolder he—that durst engage—to write:
 The Merchant bold, that first launch'd out to sea,
 But which of these were half so bold as me,
 That dar'd to preface such an unsledg'd COMEDY?

An act like this might teach Hibernian brow
 With shame to sicken, or with blushes glow.
 My dauntless soul—even mine—began to quake
 When first 'twas told—"This prologue you must speak."

A 4

My

My friend, quoth I, wou'd you persuade the town
 To let this thing (you call a play) go down,
 First brase my front—or double brase your own.
 Lord, Sir, said he, [mimicking the Author's manner]
 I'm charly out o' th' case,

No Dublin mark appears upon my face,
 While yours rejoices in a case of brase.
 Another brash—(your phiz perhaps wou'd take it)
 (Th' ironic scoundrel simper'd as he spake it)
 A blush might cover or conceal your fear,
 But—saith—I've got no brazing metals here—
 Unless you'll try thi. honest batch of claret—
 The best of varnish!—zounds man!—let us stare it.

“Thus arm'd, behold! intrepidly I go
 “To plead your cause—and with a suppliant bow
 “Implore the gods above—(galleries) the goddesses
 “below—(boxes)
 “Their smiles secur'd—the critic—(pit)—I defy,
 “'Twere mad to damn a fav'rite of the sky—(galleries)
 “Or shou'd their rabid rage, misplac'd, light here—
 (on himself)
 “I value nor Purthian quiver or spear.”—(singing
 the tune.)

“Choice nonpareils”—(in the tune)—in vain shall
 whizz around my ear,
 “We tipsy fellows—(staggers)—claim some aid divine,
 “And if not me—they'll reverence the wine.” (staggers)
 But hold—my mem'ry—han't I forgotten, tho'—
 What I'd to ask?—Why curse it—let it go—

You'll guess, perhaps, what I wou'd wish to say—
 Pity the poet—and permit his play
 To live—like other maggots—for a single day.

Thus far indulg'd—we'll shun all future evil,
 He bates damnation—as he bates the devil.

M——m.

B——

Dramatis Personæ.

Epicene,	- - - - -	Mr. Cresswick.
Lord Promise,	- - - - -	Mr. Powell.
Mr Lambton,	- - - - -	Mr. Oram.
Major Stanfield,	- - - - -	Mr. Leng.
Sir Harry Temple,	- - - - -	Mr. Eyles.
Wilville,	- - - - -	Mr. Wood.
Clement,	- - - - -	Mr. Raworth.
Varnish,	- - - - -	Mr. Gay.
Fourbe,	- - - - -	Mr. Buck.
Ralph,	- - - - -	Mr. Robertson.
Lady Fanny Promise,	- - - - -	Mrs. M'George.
Miss Lambton,	- - - - -	Mrs. Saunders.
Maria,	- - - - -	Mrs. Hitchcock.
Miss Clement,	- - - - -	Mrs. Eyles.
Miss Spence,	- - - - -	Mrs. Raworth.
Miss Standfield,	- - - - -	Mrs. Child.
A Child, Servants, &c.		

SCENE, LONDON.

TIME, that of Representation.

The

THE
MACARONI.

A C T I.

SCENE, a Dressing-Room in EPICENE's House.
EPICENE discovered sitting before a Glass, FOURBE
attending.

Epicene. WHAT, will you never have done?—
Here have I been three hours under
your hands, and am scarce fit to be seen yet.

Fourbe. Oh, non, begar, you be ver fit to be seen—
Me chalange all de friseur in Angleterre to shew so com-
pleat, so degagee a gentilhomme as you—Ma foy, you
seem de finished marqui—So gentileffe, von wou'd
swear dère vas not von drop of de English blood in you.

Epi. You are a flattering rascal—But, I like you the
better for it—How do my cloaths become me?

Four. Oh, admirable!

Epi. Do they sit easy?

Four. Impossible to be better.

Epi. I think this suit will gain me credit in the
world—A happy fancy, something of the true *ton*, with-
out the least tincture of barbarism—What a great pi-
ty 'tis, Fourbe, we can't entirely introduce the Italian
manners and customs here?

Four. Oh, 'tis great pity indeed—de nation never
will do any good till den.

Epi.

Epi. Never—When do you expect the cargo from Venice?

Four. Every day, Sir.

Epi. Is it consign'd to the Ambassador?

Four. Ouy, Monsieur—all ver safe.

Epi. Or else those harpies, the custom-house officers, would be sure to seize it.

Four. Ah, unconscionable!—to force the fine polishe gentilhomme, to take up wid de Englishe manufacture.

Epi. Fourbe you are a sensible fellow.

Four. Dat is by following your instructions, Sir.

Epi. You may take the suit I had made up, at landing here, by that ignorant English taylor.

Four. Je vous suis oblige—I am sure dey are not fit to be seen.

Epi. Are the pictures sent home I bought yesterday?

Four. Ouy, Monsieur—and de ver fine collection dey be.

Epi. Do you think so?—I never examined them.

Four. No, Sir!

Epi. No—they bore a great price, and were sold for originals of Corregio and Titian; that was sufficient.

Four. O l'ame généreuse!—How few have the generosity and taste like you!

Epi. Well, leave me, and give orders to admit visitors now.

Exit Fourbe.

Let me see—I was cursedly taken in last night—Four hundred pieces—Umph!—Rather too dear for my experience. I shall be oblig'd, in my own defence, to be initiated into the mysteries of the family—I must, by all that's needful, else my venerable oaks that so long have rear'd their stately heads, will speedily tumble—Yet these are trifling vexations compared to that unlucky contract with Promise's sister.

Enter FOURBE.

Four. My Lord Promise, to wait upon your Honour.

Epi. Shew him up—

Enter Lord PROMISE.

What, Promise!—where the deuce have you hid yourself for the last fortnight?

Lord Promise. Tho' buried in obscurity, yet busily employed, I assure you—But, hey day!—What can you

you be possibly dress'd for now?—You are not going to a masquerade.

Epi. No.

L. Pro. You don't intend this for a wedding suit, I hope?

Epi. No—Strike me into a non entity, if I do.

L. Pro. Ha! ha! ha!—Come, what's the real occasion?

Epi. To display my taste and elegance, and I think this will give a convincing proof of both.

L. Pro. Ha! ha! ha!—Upon my soul, you make such large advances to the feminine gender, that in a little time 'twill be difficult to tell to which sex you belong.

Epi. I would have it so—I do it to be distinguished from the Tramontane—but I want to know where you have been?—I have hunted all the public places in London for you, without success; and I thought, if alive, I must have met you at one of them.

L. Pro. You find you are mistaken then—I can readily live without a continual round of Dissipation, tho' to you it may be impossible—Your existence depends upon dress and fashion—I despise both—Even my pleasures are different from yours; I am wholly devoted to the charms of beauty, you, to those hourly discovered by your looking-glass.

Epi. And, pray, which are most harmless to mankind? I who am amused by dress, and a passion for myself, or you, who, for a trifling gratification, are continually studying the ruin of every girl handsome enough to attract your notice?

L. Pro. Why, Jack, you have not spirit enough to make an attack upon any female, either in an honourable or any other manner—Now the warmth of my constitution hurries me on to pleasures which you, tasteless mortal, never dream of.

Epi. And often exposes you to very disagreeable consequences—Witness Miss Standfield.

L. Pro. True, it sometimes happens so—but then I have courage to support myself under those difficulties—And now you mention her, I own she was a girl I lov'd more than I thought the levity of my nature cou'd admit of.

Epi.

Epi. Yes, you gave a conspicuous proof of that.

L. Pro. I did—Her father, Major Standfield, was my particular friend; a man I had an uncommon regard for—therefore I avoided meeting him afterwards, lest some unlucky chance should lodge my sword in his bosom—That you'll allow was honourable.

Epi. Oh! humane and honourable to the highest degree.

L. Pro. Yes, after the many proofs of my skill in the sword, I could have no reason to doubt its success with an old man, so, to be entirely out of harm's way, I took that opportunity of gratifying my desire in visiting the principal courts of Europe.

Epi. To which accident I was indebted for the pleasure of your company home from Naples.

L. Pro. You was—During near five years residence abroad, I have never even heard from the poor girl, though, upon my soul, I have often severely felt for the unhappy situation I left her in—which plainly proves that I am not destitute of compassion.

Epi. Oh! a miracle of tenderness!

L. Pro. In foreign climes, as well as at home, I was confirm'd in my favourite principle, that women, if rightly attack'd, are sure to yield—I found you indeed an altered fellow, without either life or soul, nor could my utmost endeavours arouse you—I wanted you to be a man of spirit; your ambition was to appear a first-rate Macaroni; you are returned fully qualified, and determined, I see, to shew the world what a contemptible creature an Englishman dwindles into, when he adopts the follies and vices of other nations.

Epi. Strike me speechless, George! if you are not devilish severe—but, *parlate liberamente*—I can't take any thing ill you say—May ill-breeding be my portion if I don't pity your want of taste!—Let me tell you, my Lord, 'tis we who enjoy all the real pleasures of life without any of its inconveniencies—Love, I grant you, is not admitted into our system. We look upon it, at best, as a passion attended with so many disagreeable sensations that it is not worth the pursuit.

L. Pro. What a fellow, for a girl of my sister's sense, to be united to!

Epi. 'Tis true we do amuse ourselves sometimes with the ladies—imitate their manners—but carefully avoid all serious connection with them—Oh, Lord! what a horrid thing love must be!—To take off all attention from ourselves, and study to be what you call manly, brave, noble, and generous, in order to appear amiable in the eyes of the fair—Ha! ha! ha!—No, no, by all that's ridiculous, it will never do.

L. Pro. Then has a pretty girl no influence on thee?

Epi. Not in the least—May the sun freckle me if she has! but as she regards my dress and conversation.

L. Pro. Nor you do not wish to make a conquest of one?

Epi. Not I, by all that's fashionable! Hearkee Promise, do you think if I loved a girl, that I cou'd devote the time I do to the more essential business of decorating my person?—Look at me well, and answer truly.

L. Pro. No, that wou'd then be one of your least cares.

Epi. Then, may my cloaths mis-fit me! if I would forego that happiness to possess all the graces the poets ever assembled in woman!

L. Pro. You'll except my sister—How do you intend to manage in that affair?

Epi. Now you puzzle me—but when I know myself I'll tell you.

L. Pro. Have you seen her since you came home?

Epi. No, but I design it.

L. Pro. Take care, or you'll lose her—She's followed now by a brisker lover—But that I find wou'd be no misfortune to you—Don't you think our old dads were rather foolish when they signed that contract, which obliges you to marry each other, or forfeit thirty thousand pounds?

Epi. I am afraid I shall suffer by their folly—But who is the happy man?

L. Pro. Tom Clement, a worthy young fellow of family and fortune.

Epi. I don't know him.

L. Pro. I suppose not—Come, I'll introduce you to two of the loveliest angelic creatures the sun ever shone upon.

Epi.

Epi. If you can convince me the sun shines upon any one I love better than myself, you may; if not, excuse me—Pray, who are these lovely angelic creatures?

L. Pro. They are two of the fairest of Eve's daughters, whom I have just decoyed up to town, upon the old scheme.

Epi. Then I may conclude it was about them you were so busily employ'd during your late invisibility?

L. Pro. Right—Not having visited my father's estate in the wilds of Yorkshire since my return from travel, I resolv'd upon an excursion thither—The romantic beauty of the country pleas'd me much, presenting an agreeable contrast to the place I had just left—On Sunday, knowing the church to be the only spot where I might pick and chuse the rustics to advantage, I resolv'd not to miss the opportunity.

Epi. For shame, my Lord, have you so little religion in you?

L. Pro. Much the same as yourself in that respect, my boy—There is only this difference, you cannot think, I will not—But how shall I express the astonishment which seized me upon beholding, amongst many of homely garb and feature, two of the sweetest girls nature ever formed.

Epi. So, so!—Fresh game.

L. Pro. On enquiry, I found they were daughters to an old gentleman, whom a variety of misfortunes had drove to this part of the world as an asylum—The eldest was handsome enough to justify the disguises of Jove had he been on earth—But never was modesty, beauty and native elegance so happily united as in the youngest—I am not adamant at any time, here I took fire in an instant—As soon as service was over which I thought the longest ever performed, I introduced myself to the father and his two sylvan deities.

Epi. You have a laconic method, by all that's modest!—Well, what success?

L. Pro. I think you need not ask that at any time—I seldom fail, even when circumstances are against me, much less when considered as the only son of the Earl of Watton, and heir to the estate many miles round about me—The father received me with the greatest respect;
the

the daughters with a bewitching innocent diffidence, which gave fresh lustre to their encreasing charms.

Epi. And yet those very charms you are labouring to destroy.

L. Pro. Don't interrupt me—I soon found that nothing was to be done amongst those peaceful wilds—London was the only place where I could manage them to my wish—They never had been there, and I gloried in being their introducer.

Epi. I should have thought it a hard matter to have educated them hither.

L. Pro. No, quite easy to me—A few days ingratiated me into the old gentleman's favour—Replete with every virtue which can warm the human heart, his honest unsuspecting mind has not an idea of deceit—Indeed, if he had, my plan was laid so well, he cou'd hardly have suspected it—Many years had he pass'd in this unfrequented vale, where he intomb'd one of the best of wives—Since her decease, his chief care has been the education of these two darling daughters——

Epi. Which for the future you are willing to ease him the trouble of—Very charitable, upon my word, my Lord.

L. Pro. To own a truth to you, Epicene, I often know I am acting wrong, tho' I have not courage enough to set myself right—Even in this case, such is Mr. Lambton's character, so revered his goodness, that I will freely confess, I never undertook any project of the like nature with half the remorse or compunction I did this.

Epi. You are an original by all that's whimsical!—How can you be so deliberately wicked?

L. Pro. I am not—Youth and the impetuous dictates of nature impel me—I dread to look back—Yet, cou'd I find but one of the sex above temptation, perhaps, I might be reclaim'd—But, no more, I want your immediate assistance in this affair.

Epi. Mine!

L. Pro. Yes, yours—don't be amaz'd—That was my errand hither.

Epi. The deuce it was!—to what end?

L. Pro. Why, as you are a particular friend, I'll spare you one of the girls.

Epi.

Epi. I am much obliged to you, George, but I beg to be excused.

L. Pro. Ha! ha! ha!—Are you afraid of venturing yourself with her? This is my business—Your house is very large, commodious and retired.

Epi. Well, what of that?

L. Pro. Can't you spare me half of it, to remain entirely at my disposal during this affair?

Epi. Why, my house?

L. Pro. As this is a particular case, I cou'd not so well manage every thing at one of those common receptacles—Besides, if there should be any noise, it cannot so easily be heard there.

Epi. Pray, let's hear your scheme?

L. Pro. I found that my father knew Mr. Lambton, and intended, had he not been called abroad so suddenly, to have drawn him from obscurity; I, like a dutiful son, was resolved to fulfil his desires, therefore counterfeited a letter from him, inviting Mr. Lambton up to town, promising to provide handsomely for him—Full of primitive simplicity, he immediately swallowed the bait, the family are just arrived in London, and I am about to consummate my project.

Epi. A hopeful one, I perceive.

L. Pro. Only to separate the daughters from the father, and, under pretence of visiting my sister, bring them hither.

Epi. How will you manage for a lady to represent her?

L. Pro. Suppose I dress you up? They are ignorant of the world, and deceit will easily pass upon them.

Epi. No, that I think would be carrying the joke too far—

L. Pro. I did but jest, I have already provided one for the character—You'll have no objection tho', I hope, to lend me a helping hand upon the occasion?

Epi. Why, if you'll free me from any danger which may ensue on a discovery, I confess I should like the frolick well enough.

L. Pro. Never fear—Yours will be an agreeable task, to entertain the eldest. She's wild and flighty, owing to the solitude she was educated in, yet fraught with such innocence and simplicity, that had I not beheld her sister,

ter, every wish would be gratified in her.

Epi. So you want me to amuse her, while you besiege your favourite object?

L. Pro. I do; who, in such a situation, I think, cannot fail to surrender.

Epi. What do you imagine the father will be doing in the mean time?

L. Pro. I have taken care he shall not interrupt me, and now that matters are settled with you, I'll step and see how they do after their journey.

Epi. Do you hear, George, come back directly, that I may know how to proceed.

L. Pro. As soon as possible—Not a minute is now to be lost, till that arrives which crowns my bliss in the enjoyment of love and beauty. *Exit.*

Epi. How these foolish passions transport the man! What are his raptures of love and beauty to the superior delights of the grand *coup d'éclat* at the dear, dear masquerade! *Exit.*

SCENE, *Varnish's House.*

Mr. LAMBTON, Miss LAMBTON, MARIA.

Mr. LAMBTON. Thank heaven! we are safe arrived—'Twas a fatiguing journey for one of my years, and nothing could have induced me to revisit the world, but the hopes of you, my children, reaping some future advantage from it—As for myself, declined in the vale of life, I was content with my situation—I thankfully enjoyed the blessings of Providence, nor envied the ideal happiness of those above me.

Maria. Indeed, papa, I think you were much in the right—For my part, I prefer a cottage with virtue to a palace with guilt.

Miss Lambton. So do I; yet I think it possible to gain the palace without partaking of the guilt.

Mar. I'm afraid you'll find yourself mistaken, sister.

Miss Lamb. Perhaps not—Every thing at present seems fair for it—Under the protection of so great a man as the Earl of Witton, what have we to fear?—

Are not we to be introduced to Lord Promise's sister?

What

What may not she do for us?—I'm sure if I enjoy'd her fortune, my heart would delight in finding out proper objects to make happy.

Mr. Lamb. True child, it should be t'ie province of those whom providence hath thus distinguished, and I acknowledge I've heard the best of characters of both—I am not apt lightly to distrust, yet when I reflect on our situation it makes me dread a disappointment—Above two hundred miles from home—Our money almost exhausted in coming hither—Not even an acquaintance in London to apply to—And two daughters, in some degree objects of temptation, exposed to the snares of such a town as this, with only an aged father to protect them—In such——

Miss Lamb. I can assure you, papa, you torment yourself with groundless chimeras—Could any one behave more politely than lord Promise?—Did not he say you might depend upon his father's friendship for you—Is not his letter the greatest security—Surely then you cannot hesitate a moment, in preferring affluence, to the indigence we have just quitted.

Mr. Lamb. Daughter, he that possesses content is richer than a scepter'd monarch—What cares had I to disturb me at Monkton?—My honest friends and neighbours, during the many years I passed amongst them, regarded me as a father, friend and instructor. Poor people! my heart is with you still—But I must now go see that Ralph has got our little baggage safe; we need not expect to meet here with that fidelity and simplicity which characterizes our untaught villagers. *Exit.*

Miss Lamb. Still, sister, I find you have not a very favourable opinion of the cause which brought us hither.

Mar. I own I have not—Ever since leaving our peaceful dwelling, I know not why, but an unusual sadness has taken possession of me.

Miss Lamb. Oh, that's easily accounted for—It is because you left that dear, sweet sighing swain of yours, Mr. Wilville, behind—Tho' Sir Harry Temple was with him, yet I was not sad—Our journey, to me, seem'd enchantingly pleasant—Oh, Lud!—The swiftness of our expedition—the variety of objects—the uncommon

mon politeness we were treated with on the road—the amazing noise, hurry, and bustle we saw in coming hither, has filled my mind with images I never had the least idea of before—Oh! happy creatures, who continually enjoy such blessings without interruption.

Mar. Perhaps, not so happy as you imagine sister—There may be real enjoyments here as well as in retirement, but I am apt to think true content is easier to be found in the moss-grown cot, than the cloud-aspiring dome.

Miss Lamb. There again we differ—I am heartily weary of solitude, and leave to you the undisturbed enjoyment of going to rest with the sun, that, like him, you may be the harbinger of morn—treading the cow-slip bending green, to visit your lowing herds, who constantly welcome and reward you with overflowing bowls of nectar—at noon, feasting on patriarchal luxuries—towards eve—but let that suffice. Contrast it with what Lord Promise told us of a fine lady's life—Rising at noon—paying morning visits—dining at six—dressing—then whirling away to routs, balls, assemblies, masquerades, where brilliant company, music, dancing, and card parties make the time glide insensibly away, till blushing morn unfolds the fringed curtains of the gilded east, and tears them unwillingly from their half enjoyed pleasures. If such a description be true, who, in their senses, wou'd have a doubt which to prefer?

Mar. Sister, we had better not entirely depend upon all Lord Promise told us. A little time, I am afraid, will dispel the mist that overshadows your reason.

Miss Lamb. Then if it be a mist, sister, I never desire it to be removed—Adieu, I hope for ever, to those purling rills, deep embowered shades, and fleecy nibblers of the plain, that hitherto have been our companions; a brighter scene now opens to my view, and if Sir Harry Temple knew but where to trace us, my joys then wou'd be compleat.

Mar. Flatter not yourself so much, Charlotte, as to imagine we have such power over them—To accident only we are indebted for their acquaintance—nor have we a right to expect it to continue—'Tis true, they did us a signal piece of service in rescuing us from such a crew

crew of gypsies, who, meeting us where they did, wou'd probably have robb'd, perhaps murder'd us.

Miss Lamb. I shall ever remember their heroic behaviour—How soon they dispersed and put to flight those dastardly wretches—Your fright gave you additional charms, and notwithstanding your timidity and delicacy, you gave sufficient testimonies that your deliverer was not indifferent to you.

Mar. Too much otherwise, I fear, for my future peace.

Miss Lamb. The adventure was so much to my taste that I enjoyed it—My champion, I thought, received my acknowledgments with surprize—Perhaps, he did not expect such language from the rusticity of our appearance.

Mar. Why, really, it was something uncommon.

Miss Lamb. We have often seen them since, and they as often offered up their vows—Our father seem'd pleas'd with their visits, knows both their families, and acknowledges them accomplish'd gentlemen.

Mar. 'Tis true, he does, but appearances are oft deceitful—I confess Wilville rais'd emotions in my breast, I had till then been a stranger to—The confusion I was in, the danger he rescu'd me from, attended with such a tender, respectful behaviour, beyond what I had ever seen or imagined, made too deep an impression on me ever to be erased.

Miss Lamb. I shall keep you in countenance, for my heart, I believe, is in pretty near the same condition.

Mar. I left the country with regret, as I had not an opportunity of acquainting him with our sudden departure—I wish, yet fear to see him again—Pray heaven he be sincere in his professions! for I find the future happiness of my life depends upon it.

Miss Lamb. That you need not have the least doubt of—I dare say they were distracted on missing us, and have dispatch'd emissaries around the country in quest of us.

Mar. Hush. we are interrupted,

Enter Lord PROMISE and Mr. LAMBTON.

L. Pro. Mr. Lambton, I am heartily glad to see you—Welcome to London.

Mr. Lamb.

Mr. Lamb. My Lord, I am much obliged to you for this favour.

L. Pro. Not in the least—Ladies, I am happy in seeing you look so well after your journey—I thought it impossible your charms could have received addition, yet I find change of air, and extraordinary exercise, have given encreasing lustre to the vermeil tincture of your cheeks.

Mr. Lamb. My Lord, your politeness makes my girls blush.

L. Pro. There is no occasion for that, Sir, they were sufficiently captivating before—I rode post to town, Mr. Lambton, to apprise my father of your coming, but unluckily found him laid up in a fit of the gout.

Mr. Lamb. I am sorry for it, my Lord.

L. Pro. Why, so am I, especially as it deprives him of the pleasure of welcoming you as he intended—But, I hope, a few days will set him on his legs again, and then—not that he hath been idle, there is something in view which, in all probability, will, in a short time, make you ample amends for the injuries of fortune.

Mr. Lamb. My Lord, you overwhelm me with kindness—I know not how to—

L. Pro. Not a word more—But, Mr. Lambton, my father has a particular request to make you.

Mr. Lamb. I beg, my lord, you'll let me know it.

L. Pro. That you'll accept of this—[gives him a paper]—Nay I must beg of you not to examine it till you are more at leisure.

Mr. Lamb. I fear my lord, 'tis some fresh obligation, and I have already received more than I can ever hope to return.

L. Pro. Do not mention it. Let me insist on your putting it up. You have it in your power amply to repay me.

Mr. Lamb. My Lord!

L. Pro. Come, let's change the subject. My sister, Lady Fanny Promise, having heard of your arrival, sends her compliments to the ladies, and if not too much fatigued, hopes for the pleasure of seeing them directly.

Mr. Lamb. Ah, my Lord, I wish you'd excuse them.

Girls,

Girls, like mine, bred up in retirement, have not sufficient knowledge of the world, to render themselves agreeable to a lady of her rank and quality.

L. Pro. They have those native graces of the mind and person, which are infinitely preferable. Where nature hath been lavish, her handmaid art, at distance waits behind, conscious of her inability to add to their charms. What say you, ladies, will you favour me so far?

Miss Lamb. Just as my papa pleases, my Lord.

Mr. Lamb. Well, my Lord, since you'll take the trouble of conducting them, tho' I am sure you do them too much honour.

L. Pro. Rather give myself too much pleasure, Sir.

Miss Lamb. My Lord, since you have my papa's permission, we'll beg a little time to adjust our dress.

L. Pro. Name it, ladies, and my chariot shall attend you.

Miss Lamb. About an hour, my Lord.

L. Pro. Very well, I shall in the mean while inform my sister, that she may prepare for your reception—Ladies, your most obedient. Nay, no ceremony, Mr. Lambton.

Mr. Lamb. Give me leave, my Lord, to wait upon you down stairs

[*Exeunt L. Pro. and M. Lamb.*]

Miss Lamb. Now, sister, don't you think my presages will prove true? You see fortune already smiles upon us. I hope Lady Fanny will invite us to reside with her for the future.

Mar. How can you be so flighty?—Young as I am, every thing to me seems to wear a different aspect. I do not like Lord Promise, nor this visit, and wish you had not so readily engaged yourself.

Miss Lamb. You never will have spirit enough to make a figure in the world. However do not let us waste the time which should be employ'd in dressing.

Mar. If you recollect, we need no great preparation—our wardrobe is soon looked over.

Miss Lamb. Too true, and a mortifying recollection it is.

Mar. Not in the least: Let not that disturb you, Charlotte.

Charlotte. Happier far our humble state, cloathed in spotless innocence, and heaven-approving poverty, than if array'd in all the splendid honours, and gilded trappings, of specious guilt and infamy. *Exeunt.*

A C T II.

SCENE, LADY FANNY PROMISE'S House.

Enter Lady FANNY and Miss CLEMENT.

Miss Cl. THEN you are certain Epicene is returned?

L. Fan. Oh, very certain. I had it from my brother, whom I saw this morning, *en passant*. He has been at home above three weeks, and poor neglected I never once enquired after.

Miss Cl. I find he's not one of your most passionate lovers.

L. Fan. Why no—not quite so violent in his transports as your brother—in short, I'm inform'd that he is now a finished *petite maitre*.

Miss Cl. Then I'll answer that he's not a favourite of our sex.

L. Fan. Quite the contrary to a woman of spirit. Oh, I have not patience every day to see such crowds of mincing, whiffling, powder'd Master Jemmys fill our public places, who only want to assume the petticoat, to render them compleat Misses.

Miss Cl. Ha! ha! ha! really they seem determined to rob us of that distinction.

L. Fan. Don't you think it wou'd be a just retaliation in us to claim the sword and breeches? I'm sure we shou'd become them as well as the best coxcomb of them all.

Miss Cl. Suppose you try the experiment?

L. Fan. No, there I beg to be excus'd. At present I have other matters in my head. You must know that I have been meditating a pleasant revenge on Epicene for his contemptuous coldness.

Miss Cl. He richly deserves it, and cou'd not have fallen

fallen into better hands, for you always discover'd an excellent head for contriving mischief.

L. Fan. I do love a little of it in my heart, and if you'll aid me on this occasion, I don't doubt but he'll prove a charming subject to work upon.

Miss Cle. Oh, you can't oblige me more than by employing me.

L. Fan. Nay, I never doubted you, but here you'll have a difficult part to sustain.

Miss Cle. So much the better, the more glory if I succeed—Come, let's hear.

L. Fan. You are entirely unknown to him, have been abroad, and are well acquainted with many of the places he travelled through.

Miss Cle. I am.

L. Fan. Can't you pretend that you are a relation of some noble family whom you are intimate with?

Miss Cle. Readily. I correspond with several he visited, who often mention'd him.

L. Fan. Very well then, you can easily frame a story of your falling in love with him there, and following him over to England.

Miss Cle. What good will that do?

L. Fan. A great deal. We must let your brother into the secret, as his assistance will be necessary—and, *a propos*, here he comes.

Enter CLEMENT.

Clement. Madam, I received your orders, and flew upon the wings of—

L. Fan. Love to be sure. I thought so. Now for a rhapsody of flames, darts, hearts, and eyes, all jumbled together to form a passionate declaration.

Cle. Charming, cruel girl! how can you thus—

L. Fan. I told you he was beginning. Very pretty tho'. Pray let's have it again. Charmingly cruel, or cruelly charming. It will do either way, and may serve now or any other time.

Cle. How can you take such pleasure in tormenting a man who loves to the degree that I do?

L. Fan. Because the greatest pleasure our sex can enjoy is to torment. I'll not hear a word in answer—I have many times told you that nothing in nature can

be more ridiculous than the enraptur'd effusions of two love-stricken creatures to a third person—There is now more interesting business for you. Your rival is in London.

Cle. Who, Epicene?

L. Fan. Even he—Don't put on a serious face till you have more reason—You have often heard of the contract executed between Epicene's father and mine, by which they were mutually bound, that we, when of age, should marry each other, or forfeit thirty thousand pounds.

Cle. I have.

L. Fan. His father is dead, and mine has long since repented the warmth of friendship which hurried him on to such an inconsiderate act, and, as an atonement, often declared, could I free myself from the obligation, his consent should await the choice of my heart—In this situation, you shall win and wear me.

Cle. I accept the conditions, Madam—With so glorious a reward in view, I will either deliver you or perish in the attempt.

L. Fan. Heroically spoken—"None but the brave deserve the fair"—Ha! ha! ha!—No great danger at present I believe—Come, follow me, and if I don't put you into a method of obtaining Epicene's part of the bond, and amply revenging yourself on him at the same time, then say, for once, a woman failed in plotting and contriving.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. A Gentleman to wait on you, my Lady.

L. Fan. Conduct him up stairs—*[Exit. Ser.]*—Let me beg of you to retire for a few moments—As soon as the Gentleman is gone, I'll inform you of my whole design.

Exeunt Mr. and Miss Clement.

Enter MAJOR STANDFIELD.

Major Standfield!—Is it possible I see you again!—Where, in the name of wonder, have you buried yourself these four years past?

Major. Oh, Lady Fanny! would to heaven I had been buried, and mix'd my mouldering ashes with my ancestors, before I reached these years of sorrow!

L. Fan. Bless me, Major! what's the matter?

Maj. Nothing, Madam—I beg your pardon—

Pray

Pray, where's your brother?— I learn he's return'd from travel.

L. Fan. Upon my honour, I don't know—Have you any particular business with him?

Maj. A little, Madam, but it will soon be settled.

L. Fan. I hope nothing disagreeable has happen'd? How does Miss Standfield?—What cou'd be her reason for withdrawing so suddenly from town, and living ever since in such impenetrable obscurity?

Maj. Oh, Lady Fanny! you once profess'd a friendship for her—But 'tis no matter—nothing can now atone for injuries like mine!—

L. Fan. For the love of heaven, Major, explain yourself.

Maj. I can't, Madam, till I see Lord Promise.

L. Fan. Nay, pray; I conjure you, tell me—Can I serve you? If I can, my friendship and fortune are both at your service.

Maj. Your worth, Madam, wou'd, if possible, atone for your brother's villany.

L. Fan. Villany!

Maj. Yes, Lady Fanny, the worst of villany—The wretch who wantonly deprives the credulous virgin of her innocence and peace of mind, deserves an epithet much worse than that.

L. Fan. Has my brother been such a wretch?

Maj. He has, Madam—Pardon my thus disturbing you with a repetition of my wrongs. I thought to have conceal'd them 'till I had found their author—But griefs like mine will force their way—After six-and-twenty years spent in the service of my country, I vainly hoped to pass my latter days in ease and tranquillity, blest, as I thought myself, in a daughter, where grace and modesty united to adorn the curious workmanship of heaven.

L. Fan. Pray go on, I am all attention.

Maj. Lord Promise, Madam, whom unsuspectingly I admitted to my inmost friendship, in an evil hour, gain'd on the fond affection of an artless girl, and, for a few moments unworthy gratification, plunged a dagger in a father's breast, and entail'd eternal infamy, thence

and sorrow on the very creature, whom honour should have obliged him to protect.

L. Fan. Merciful powers!—Can I be related to such a monster—Now do I readily account for the settled melancholy which preyed upon the lovely girl before she quitted London, and which I in vain urged her to disclose—But why did you not inform me of this before?

Maj. An indignant shame tied up my tongue—My hand, tho' old, I hoped was not quite unnerved, on that alone I relied for satisfaction—Yet there I was disappointed; to avoid my resentment he quitted the kingdom. Defeated of my revenge, I retired to a little retreat in the farthest part of Devonshire, taking with me the tear-concealing, yet almost grief-consumed object of his loose desires.

L. Fan. Poor Eugenia!—Little did I suspect the cause of your retreat, if I had, you shou'd not have gone without a partner in your sorrows.

Maj. How can souls so nearly allied by nature, differ so much in sentiment! There, a few months after, I was presented with a grandson. An event which almost deprived the wretched mother of life, in giving birth to the innocent fruit of their guilty commerce.

L. Fan. What an affecting story!

Maj. We have lived ever since in the utmost privacy, waiting an opportunity for revenge or justice. Last week I received intelligence from a friend, whom I entrusted with the secret, that he was returned; this hastened me up to town with my little family. Hitherto he hath evaded my search. This house I thought the most likely place to find him, and——

L. Fan. Dear Major, I am happy in meeting with you. For the love of mercy suspend your anger—Perhaps I may procure you reparation, at least, as far as 'tis in his power to make it.

Maj. Believe me, Madam, I had much rather have redress from equity than the sword—else shou'd I now have conceal'd my purpose—But, if the first fail, I am determined to have recourse to the latter—If I fall, my sorrows fall with me, and he will have the glory of compleatly finishing the misfortunes of an unhappy family.

L. Fan.

L. Fan. I hope there will be no fear of that—Pray is Miss Standfield still in town?

Maj. She is, Madam.

L. Fan. Might I hope for the pleasure of seeing her here?

Maj. I am afraid, my Lady, that will be impossible—There is a conscious inferiority attending fallen innocence, which dreads to look up at the unblemished front of virtue.

L. Fan. To me, that should not be—From our earliest acquaintance I always esteem'd her as a friend, but, now, I love her as a sister. Let me intreat you to conduct her hither.

Maj. I will try, Madam, if I can persuade her to it.

L. Fan. Nay, but immediately. You must not attempt to meet Lord Promise first.

Maj. I shall not, Madam.

L. Fan. Depend upon my utmost endeavours to re-establish your peace and honour, upon the most permanent basis.

Maj. Your good wishes, Lady Fanny, I am afraid exceed your abilities to perform. Nevertheless, we are equally obliged to you. My daughter shall wait upon you. Take her under your protection, Madam, and ease a father of some part of his vital-preying cares.

L. Fan. Most gladly. Haste her hither without the least delay.

Maj. As soon as possible, Madam. *[going.]*

L. Fan. Oh, and I must insist on seeing my little nephew at the same time. He shall be part of my charge.

Maj. Your Ladyship shall be obliged. *Exit.*

L. Fan. Poor Man! his story has raised a powerful advocate in my breast. What a libertine is my brother!—I am shock'd at his wickedness, and tremble for the consequences. Yet, how to reform him?—A task, I am afraid, beyond my abilities, tho' still, I think, nature's seeds, however ill the cultivation, were designed to raise the noblest fruits. I will attempt it, and may some power benignant inspire me with the means to reclaim a brother, and relieve a friend!

Exit.

SCENE, a Chamber in Varnish's House.

Enter MISS LAMBERTON and RALPH CLUMSEY.

Miss Lamb. Now, my good Ralph, I begin to have some hopes of you.

Ra. Efaith, Miss, 'tis more than I have of myself. Wounds and heart! I think I look more like a hog in armour, than any thing of christian flesh and blood.

Miss Lamb. I own you have not all the ease and elegance I cou'd wish, but it can't be helped, and you must do your best.

Ra. And bad enough, I am afraid, that will be. You wou'd make me be trussed up in this manner. I'm sure I was easier and better in my own shapes. Now, pray may I ask, what is all this mighty rout about?

Miss Lamb. I am going to visit a lady of quality, and you must attend me. Put on your best behaviour, for very likely there will be some grand company there.

Ra. Then, I think, Miss, you had better leave me behind.

Miss Lamb. Why so?

Ra. Because I am sure I shall be dashed—For tho' I am reckon'd as tight a lad, and as feat a dancer as any at our maying, yet, if you'll believe me, I can scarce pull up courage enough to shew my shapes amongst the lasses, and you know we have some prime ones.

Miss Lamb. I must encourage him a little—*(aside)* But you cannot imagine what an alteration there is in you now—That dress becomes you wonderfully, and you look quite graceful.

Ra. Yes, I always was said to have grace—Master himself often told me that I was a gracious lad.

Miss Lamb. No, but I mean that you are genteel.

Ra. Oh—Why, for certain, all the lasses used to prefer me for my gentility.

Miss Lamb. Very well then—he ruled by me, Ralph, and I don't doubt but every thing will succeed to my wish.

Ra. Mayhap they may—I'm sure, Miss, I will do all

all in my power to serve you, for never from me if I don't love you heartily.

Miss Lamb. Love me!

Ra. Ay, may I be shot if I don't, as well as if you were my own sister—Nay, why shouldn't I?—I must be very ungrateful indeed, if I did not—I'm sure master has been more than a father to me.

Miss Lamb. I believe you are gratitude itself—When my fortunes are accomplished you shall not go unrewarded.

Ra. Well, well, don't let that concern you—Be sure now, when we are abroad, you ask me to talk as little as possible.

Miss Lamb. Yes, yes, the less you speak the better.

Ra. Adad, I believe it will—You may tell them I am dumb, if you please.

Miss Lamb. No, that will not do neither—All I want of you is to behave very mannerly, and avoid telling any stories about our mode of living in the country.

Ra. Oh, let me alone, I'll be bound to be cunning enough for the best of them—Not but, if they are fond of stories, I can match them there too, for I can tell plenty.

Miss Lamb. Stories?

Ra. Ay, I can tell them the story of St. George and the Dragon, or Valentine and Orson, or twenty as good—I am very famous for them, and have told them an hundred times over—You shall hear me hem! hem!—There was a certain valiant knight who—who—[repeating, *as he slips him*]—Nay nay, hear me out.

Miss Lamb. No, no, Ralph—be but silent, and do as well as you can.

Enter MARTA.

Mar. Not ready yet, sister?

Miss Lamb. Yes, I've been only giving a few instructions to my servant behind you.

Mar. Pray, sister, what occasion for him to attend us?

Miss Lamb. Oh, very great—Consider the figure we shou'd make without one servant to wait upon us.

Mar. Better none than him—Has my father seen him thus?

Miss Lamb. No, my dear, I don't intend he shall till I return.

Mar. Well, I think you are very wrong—but you must have your way—Come, the coach has been waiting some time.

Ra. Pray, Miss, am I to go within side the coach or without?

Miss Lamb. O, without side, by all means.

Ra. An't I to hold up your tail as you go in and out?

Mar. No, fool; come along.

Exeunt.

SCENE, *Another Apartment in Varnish's House.*

Enter Mr. LAMBTON and VARNISH.

Mr. Lamb. Mr. Varnish, your servant—I was told you went out, Sir, and have waited impatiently for your return.

Var. I am sorry I shou'd make you wait—Pray, Sir, what are your commands with me?

Mr. Lamb. This house, I suppose, is yours, Sir?

Var. It is, Sir, at your service.

Mr. Lamb. Lord Promise, I presume, hired these lodgings for us?

Var. His Lordship informed me you was a particular friend of his, and requested, as a favour, that I wou'd accommodate you, to prevent the inconveniencies attending common lodgings.

Mr. Lamb. His Lordship was very good—I imagine, Sir, you are well acquainted with him?

Var. I have had the honour of knowing his Lordship these several years past.

Mr. Lamb. I beg your pardon, Sir, for being so inquisitive—My reason was, an ambiguous note his Lordship put into my hand at leaving this, which you are to explain.

Var. What was it, pray, Sir?

Mr. Lamb. A draft for an hundred pounds, with these

these words—"I hope Mr. Lambton will accept of
 "this trifle as an earnest of my wishes to serve him.
 "I dare not be more explicit at present, but Mr.
 "Varnish can fully inform him of particulars.

"PROMISE."

Var. True, Sir, his Lordship has repos'd that confidence in me.

Mr. Lamb. Well, Sir, I shall take it as a favour if you'll explain his meaning.

Var. With all my heart Sir,—Lord Promise is a Nobleman of the strictest honour and greatest generosity.

Mr. Lamb. I don't doubt it, Sir.

Var. I assure you his generosity is unbounded—I have seen such instances of it as wou'd amaze you.

Mr. Lamb. Indeed I have, since my short knowledge of him, experienced many proofs of his benevolence.

Var. Oh, dear Sir, nothing to his desires or intentions—The moment he saw you and your family, he was resolv'd to serve you.

Mr. Lamb. How few Noblemen have such greatness of soul!

Var. Very few indeed, Sir—He observed, with concern, that you had lived many years in the world to little purpose.

Mr. Lamb. How, Sir? I hope not—I endeavour'd to fulfil the will of him who placed me in such a situation, and that I thought the principal end of my creation—If I have erred, I trust he will forgive me.

Var. Dear Sir, you mistake my meaning—He found you grown grey in obscurity, without the least reward for such merit.

Mr. Lamb. Yes, Sir, I've had the greatest reward that cou'd possibly have been bestow'd upon me here.

Var. Really, Sir!—What was it, pray?

Mr. Lamb. The testimony of a good conscience.

Var. I am glad to find it so, Sir—tho' 'tis more than I can say for myself (*aside*)—But Lord Promise wishes to reward such goodness in this world—He has many relations of great dignity in the world—They have heard your character from the Earl, and you may depend upon being speedily provided for.

Mr.

Mr. Lamb. How shall I acknowledge so many unmerited obligations?

Var. Very easily—I hope, Mr. Lambton, your long retirement from the world has not contracted your notions of life?

Mr. Lamb. I believe not, Sir—On the contrary, the long heart-felt serenity I've enjoy'd, has expanded every grateful and noble thought within me.

Var. Nay, I shou'd not wonder at it—Persons long buried in solitude, are apt to look with a gloomy aspect on the harmless amusements of the world—And those things, in their nature perfectly innocent, they, with a cynic severity, condemn as absolutely criminal.

Mr. Lamb. Far otherwise with me, I assure you, Sir—I look on all mankind as my brethren, as such I love, and wou'd, if possible, serve them—For surely that wretch must be dead to all feelings, whose bosom admits not that heav'n born child of mercy, sweet charity.

Var. I am very glad, Sir, to find you have such enlarged notions. Can you then be so chimerical as to prefer an empty name, a few imaginary virtues, to solid substantial happiness?

Mr. Lamb. I don't comprehend you.

Var. In a word then, Lord Promise is captivated with the beauty of your youngest daughter, and it will be your own fault if you do not pass the remainder of your days in ease and tranquility.

Mr. Lamb. Lord Promise in love with my daughter?—it cannot be.

Var. Truth, every syllable, Sir.

Mr. Lamb. Good heav'n! can he—but I won't disturb myself—He has not sure any dishonourable designs on my poor child?

Var. Lord Promise, Sir, is all honour and generosity.

Mr. Lamb. I hope so—Gracious powers! how I tremble. Where are my children?—I'll stop their going till I have an explanation of this affair.

Var. I met the young ladies going out, Sir, just as I came in hither.

Mr. Lamb. Going, where?

Var. To visit my Lady Fanny Promise.

Mr.

Mr. Lamb. Are you sure of that?

Var. Quite certain, Sir, I knew the carriage and livery—I must keep him in suspense till the business is over.

(aside)

Mr. Lamb. I am something easier—They'll certainly be safe with her—When do they return?

Var. In about two hours.

Mr. Lamb. Well—Is Ralph, my servant, in the house?

Var. No, Sir, he attended the ladies.

Mr. Lamb. I am glad of it—I can rely upon his honesty and fidelity.

Var. Dear Sir, let me beg of you to calm your emotion—Your apprehensions are groundless, I can assure you.

Mr. Lamb. They may be so—In the mean time I request you'll return this note to his lordship—I must first know the nature of the obligations he would confer upon me—Perhaps they may be such as an honest, tho' poor man, would be above receiving.—

Offers the note.

Var. Upon my word, Sir, you must excuse me—I dare not accept it without my Lord's knowledge—I shall wait upon him directly, and on my return hope fully to satisfy all your scruples—In the mean time make yourself perfectly easy—You have only to rely on Lord Promise, and rest contented.

Exit.

Mr. Lamb. I am not much read or skill'd in the ways of mankind, yet I do not like this man's words or looks—Both seem to bear a double meaning. I am far from being easy in my mind!—Would I had never come hither! My poor unfledged young-ones! I am afraid, your father, in his latter days, has, by one imprudent action, involv'd you both in ruin! but I must now make the best of it. Thou never failing refuge of confiding innocence, guard and direct our trembling footsteps thro' this mazy labyrinth of darkness and uncertainty!

Exit.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE, *An Inn.*

Sir HARRY TEMPLE and WILVILLE meeting.

Temple. WELL Tom, have you heard any thing of the girls yet?

Wilville. No—I've searched every place where there was the least likelihood of intelligence, but all to no purpose—Have you done any good?

Tem. Not I, by Gad!—All my efforts have been fruitless—I am almost distracted!—What unlucky dogs we were to leave them just at that critical juncture!—Or who cou'd imagine they wou'd have taken flight during the little time we were absent?

Wil. Nothing cou'd equal my astonishment on missing them—Unkind Maria, not even to leave a line behind to account for this sudden revolution—

Tem. Wilville, it must certainly be some unforeseen accident which cou'd drive them up so unexpectedly.

Wil. Some fatal one, I fear—'tis a mystery I am wretched till I unravel—I'm sure we lost no time in the pursuit—and all long I flatter'd myself with the hopes of overtaking them on the road.

Tem. Ay, so did I—We drove Jehu like for it—and yet the cursed post-boys cou'd not get on fast enough to satisfy my impatience—Zounds! I wou'd have outstript the wind, and surpass'd all the fables of antiquity to have caught them—the last stage I was almost sure of it—they were not above half an hour before—Such a disappointment is enough to turn the brain of a philosopher!

Wil. Really, Temple, I did not think you were so desperately entangled before.

Tem. Nor I, by my soul—I did not know half the power the wild baggage had over me 'till I missed her. Who the devil cou'd suppose I shou'd be taken with so romantic an oddity?—And yet may I perish if I was

not

not struck with her more than any woman I ever saw before.

Wil. That is to me amazing—I think there is as great a difference between her and her sister as possible.

Tem. True, there is a great difference indeed.

Wil. Maria possesses that sweetness, that affability, that gentleness of manners which must——

Tem. O damn it, Tom! let's have no more of that sickning stuff—I hate such soft killing creatures who hulk me to sleep with their insipidity—Not but sometimes I like a scene of the pathetic, by way of contrast—but, in general, they have too much opiate to suit my constitution—No, give me the girl of fancy, who soars above the region of vulgar mortals, and scorns to tread the beaten paths of dull discretion—Such a charmer is always new—each day discovers fresh incentives to love, and we are lost in the pleasing charms of dear variety.

Wil. O brave! you improve in floridity—But this is a subject we shall never fall out about—Do you take your mistress and her dear variety, leave to me the enjoyment of endless, undescrivable happiness in the possession of her sister.

Tem. Egad, I wish I con'd——

Wil. Alas! these are lovers rhapsodies, and do not in the least contribute to the recovery of them.

Tem. Do you know that Lord Promise they came up to town with?

Wil. Only by sight.

Tem. What's his character?

Wil. That of a profess'd rake—He is the only son of the Earl of Witton, a nobleman, who is now abroad, as much respected for his virtue as his dignity—Was he at home, my first application shou'd be to him, as I am certain he has too much honour to countenance his son in any base ungenerous action.

Tem. Harkee, Tom—I'll go directly and call him to an account, and if he does not give me a satisfactory answer to my enquiries about the girls, sacrifice him to my vengeance. *[going]*

Wil. Hold, hold, be not so rash—You have not the

the least chance to gain any intelligence that way—I am equally interested with you, and as firmly determined to use my endeavours to find them—I believe they were invited up to town by him, on some infamous design, and tremble lest he should succeed in his attempts.

Tem. And yet you have the patience coolly to talk in this manner—By heaven, I'll find him out, tho' surrounded by a thousand imps of darkness, and force him to give me satisfaction.

Wil. Believe me, Temple, I have as much courage as you, tho' not of that flaming kind—I wish for an opportunity of rescuing these victims from his infernal clutches, not of signalizing my valour—He has too much spirit for so bad a heart—What wou'd be the consequence of such a meeting? Perhaps the sending one of us totally unprepared to that judgment seat, where justice must be heard, tho' it wounds the breast of soft-eyed mercy.

Tem. I own, Wilville, you are in the right—My heart is always open to conviction—We will go calmly to work; I will be guided by you—Can you point out any feasible method?

Wil. Let's try every means probable—I know his fellow traveller, Jack Epicene—I can't say that he's a favourite of mine, yet on this occasion he may be useful—'Tis very likely he is in his confidence, perhaps an assistant in this affair—Our best way will be to sound him first—We'll thither directly, probably we may learn something which will give us light to proceed further.

Tem. With all my heart—Let's about it immediately, for never shall I have a moment's ease while the girl I adore is in danger. *Exeunt.*

SCENE, *Epicene's House.*

Lord PROMISE, and Miss SPENCE as Lady FANNY.

L. Pro. Now, Polly, quite in readiness I see—Is Epicene at hand to assist you?

Miss

Miss Spen. He is, my Lord; but pray don't you think it must be a great mortification to one, who loves as I do, to become the instrument of your designs upon others?

L. Pro. I confess 'tis disagreeable, but you shall not lose by your compliance.

Miss Spen. Unhappy minute, which put it in your power thus to command me!——

L. Pro. My pretty fair moralist, I have more agreeable business on my hands now than reasoning with you——Only manage this affair with dexterity, and leave reflections to follow——They'll come fast enough of themselves.

Miss Spen. 'Tis a wicked office I have undertaken; my heart goes against it.

L. Pro. No qualms now, Polly——I thought I had removed these scruples?

Miss Spen. The stings of conscience, my Lord, are not so easily quieted——Necessity, not inclination, obliges me to join with you.

L. Pro. Then I am the more obliged to your necessity.

Enter SERVANT.

Serv. My Lord, the ladies are just arrived. *Exit.*

L. Pro. Away to the drawing-room to receive them——I'll retire for a few moments——On my entrance, remember to call Miss Lambton out, and take care that we are not interrupted. *Exeunt.*

SCENE, A Hall in the same House.

Servants introducing Miss LAMBTONS and RALPH.

John. This way, Ladies; if you please, I'll conduct you to my Lady's apartment.

Miss Lamb. Very well, friend, we follow you.

Exeunt Servant and Ladies.

Ralph, following, is stop'd by the other Servant.

Tom. Hold, my honest lad; suppose you and I go into the kitchen to take a little refreshment, and leave

leave the ladies to themselves; don't you think it will be as well?

Ra. As well! Ecod, a great deal better—I thought as how Miss was a fool, to dizen me out in this manner for folks to laugh and shout at me—but if ever they catch me behind a coach again in this trim, why my name is not Ralph Clumsy.

Tom. Oh, you must not mind such trifling accidents. You'll be used to them soon.

Ra. Shall I? By the Lord Harry, but I won't tho'—for if Master will stay here, he shall stay by himself, and so I'll tell him. But, young man, for the love of charity, give me a drink, for I have not breath to talk.

Tom. Come, my boy, follow me, and I will soon make you forget all your distresses in a jug of right old stingo.

Ra. Mercy be praised! there are some honest people in this town.

Exeunt.

S C E N E,

MARIA and Lord PROMISE discover'd.

L. Pro. How happy am I, my dear Maria, in entertaining you in this manner—I have long'd to give vent to the effusions of my heart, and own to you how much I lov'd.

Mar. My Lord!

L. Pro. Yes, Maria, I lov'd from the first moment I saw you, with an irresistible impulse.

Mar. Is it possible, my Lord?

L. Pro. As true as that you are beautiful—Love prompted me to this contrivance, and it has succeeded to my wishes—I have now the idol of my soul in my possession, and nothing but death shall ever separate us.

Mar. Good heav'ns! am I betray'd then?

L. Pro. Betray'd, my charmer! no, far from it—Can you call it betraying to live in endless felicity with him who adores you?—To be sole disposer of my life, my fortune, my happiness?—Come, thou tempting love-inviting fair one, let us not waste the precious moments which may be better spent in dissolving transports.

Mar.

Mar. Away, my Lord, you cannot surely mean to use me thus!

L. Pro. Fear nothing, my beauteous angel!—No earthly power shall now disturb our joys—Do you but smile, and kindly bless me with your endless charms, malicious deities may look with envy down on our superior bliss—Come, come to my arms, let me gently, tenderly press you to comply——

Mar. Hold, for pity's sake!—*(kneels)*—In the name of all that's good, all that's powerful, I conjure you to hear me!—for a few moments hear me.

L. Pro. Now for a stroke of the pathetic—What a pleasure to have the tender supplicating creatures on their knees to one—*(aside)*—Rise first—Do not alarm yourself, my sweet girl!—You have every thing to hope for, nothing to be apprehensive of.

Mar. Whose house are we in at present, my Lord?

L. Pro. A person's entirely devoted to me.

Mar. Oh, my fluttering heart!—And is not that lady who received us your sister?

L. Pro. As opposite to her as vice is to virtue.

Mar. Ye high-protecting powers, who behold my distress, relieve me now, or I am lost for ever!

L. Pro. My lovely innocent, you torment yourself with groundless apprehensions: You are with a man who adores you, who wou'd sacrifice his life to convince you of his truth and constancy.

Mar. Give me a proof of it, my Lord, by restoring me to my liberty.

L. Pro. Demand any other proof but that, and I will satisfy you—Make me happy, and possess every thing I can bestow—"Tis not in my power to marry you or I would, but I can make you an offering of what few wives enjoy, an undivided heart—Your father shall be made easy for life—Your sister shall partake of your felicity—All will owe their happiness to you, and my behaviour must oblige you to confess that my love and generosity shall deserve the surrender you make—The devil's in't if this won't do—I'm sure I've almost talk'd myself into a belief of the truth of it—*(aside)*

Mar. And do you think it possible, my Lord, that all the riches of the East cou'd tempt me a moment to de-

virtue from the paths of virtue?—No, destitute as I am at this instant of a friend, except in heaven—conscious of being entirely in your power, without the least human means to escape—yet such is my reliance on Providence, that I am regardless of the consequences—You may kill me, if you please, but you cannot triumph over my innocence—and I have this consolation in the midst of my distress, that there is a being will amply revenge my cause, and reward my trivial sufferings.

L. Pro. What the devil's the matter with me, that I am affected thus?

Mar. You hesitate, my Lord—If your breast be susceptible of pity or manly sentiment, do not take an ungenerous advantage of the helpless condition you have reduced me to, nor give me cause to look upon you as the destroyer of my peace and tranquility.

L. Pro. Surely persuasive force dwells on her heavenly accents!—There must be some magic power in virtue, when it can charm even such a son of vice as I am!

Mar. A mighty conquest you have gain'd indeed, my Lord!—Deceiv'd a poor old man, who near had reach'd his journey's end, without this fatal stroke to help it, and thus betray'd to ruin his two unsuspecting daughters!—Oh, my father! little did your fond honest heart imagine the reward preparing for your toilsome journey hither.

L. Pro. Certainly I have been long deceived!—Virtue is more than a name, or I could never feel these heart-rending compunctions—I must retire, or she'll make a compleat preselite of me—(*aside*)

Mar. You have a sister, my Lord, whom you dearly love, an honour'd parent, whose life, perhaps, depends on her prosperity, what must you think of that man who wantonly endeavours to destroy so fair a prospect?—How much nobler he, who, commanding his passions gives proof of his greatness of soul, by acknowledging his errors, and making every atonement in his power?

L. Pro. Why thus agitated, Maria?—By heav'n you've no cause—I love you to distraction, and cannot live without you—Yet I will not force your inclinations—I am not that monster neither—My tenderness, my generosity, my respect shall rather gain you.

Mar.

Mar. My Lord, if you have the least tenderness, the least humanity in your nature, restore me to those I am united to by duty and inclination.

L. Pro. And lose my hopes for ever—it cannot be, 'tis too great a sacrifice.

Mar. Leave me then but for a few minutes, till I try to recollect my scatter'd spirits.

L. Pro. Say you'll think kindly of me.

Mar. How can I so far contradict my heart?

L. Pro. Will you endeavour it?

Mar. I will—if possible.

L. Pro. How like a scoundrel I look now, defeated of my purpose! (*aside*) Be compos'd, Madam, I leave you in perfect security, and hope my excess of passion, will, in some measure, plead my excuse for what is past.

Mar. That, my Lord, I must judge of from your future conduct.

L. Pro. Sure, if the sex but knew how amiably commanding a virtuous woman appears, even in the eyes of an abandon'd libertine, the most thoughtless wou'd shun the paths of vice. *Exit.*

Mar. What a precipice am I on!—'Tis dreadful to look around—yet I trust that power which hitherto has saved, will still preserve me!—My father! where are now thy silver locks!—destitute of succour, thy hapless child cannot comfort thee!—Oh, Wilville! thou once rescuedst me—now indeed I want thy relieving hand—My sister too!—perhaps at this instant struggling in the toils of infamy!—Dreadful thought! I will seek her out, offer my feeble aid, and either escape or perish together! *Exit.*

SCENE, another Apartment in the same House.

Miss LAMBTON, Miss SPENCE, and EPICENE.

Epi. Ha! ha! ha!—Oh, Miss Lambton, fy upon such insinuated notions—I find, my Lady, we shall have a great deal of trouble before we can give her the true ton.

Miss Lamb. I hope your Ladyship will pity the severity of my fortune—Tho' buried in solitude, my heart has long wished to move in the circle of high life, and

and it now expands at the approaching prospect which you have assured me of.

Miss Spen. You may depend upon it—under my protection you shall be introduced into the politest assemblies.

Epi. If Miss will intrust herself to my care, I will gladly join in the charge with your Ladyship, and answer for her improvement.

Miss Spen. Directed by so perfect a master, I'm sure she cannot fail.

Epi. I do think I am tolerably well qualified—Suppose us now, Miss, in the Pantheon, or any other fashionable place—instead of standing with a modest country diffidence, and a confusion which increases the unladed roses of your cheeks—sweep along the room with all the becoming ease and assurance of a true-bred woman of fashion—pull out your glass, survey the objects round with a contemptuous disdain—Oh, my dear Lady Squander—*(curtsies)*—I am immensely glad to see you—Have you heard the news?—Oh, I am ready to die at the thoughts of it—Ha! ha! ha!—Only the grave Mrs. Scruple detected last night with a captain of the guards—Mrs. Trifle—*(curtising another way)*—I am happy in seeing you abroad—I was informed you intended retiring into the country on the death of your monkey *(turning another way)*—No, Madam, but I design to-morrow night seeing Garrick's alteration of Hamlet. Oh, pray do bring Pompey along with you, it is a creature of infinite humour, and will relieve my too great attention to the play—Ha! ha! ha!

Miss Lamb. I own, Sir, I have very little idea of the description you have been giving me, and hope you'll forgive my simplicity in asking whether modesty and innocence are fashionable qualities at those assemblies.

Epi. Umph!—why faith, I can't say that they are—They indeed attract the notice of the first couple in the kingdom, otherwise names of no great consequence now in the world.

Miss Lamb. I am sorry for it.

Epi. Sorry, why so?

Miss Lamb. Because, charmed as I am with the brilliant

tant scenes before me, I wou'd not purchase them with the loss of either.

Epi. May I renounce the pleasures of Italy, if the girl's brain is not turned!

Enter RALPH.

Ra. I beg pardon for my company; but Miss, if you please, I want to speak a few words to you.

Miss Lamb. Speak to me.

Ra. Yes, Miss, if you'll go down stairs I'll tell it you.

Epi. You had better spare her the trouble, friend, by telling it here.

Ra. Mayhap I won't tho'—

Epi. You may let it alone then; but the lady shall not stir, so get along about your business, fellow.

Ra. But I say she shall, and let me see who'll hinder her.

Epi. Who'll hinder her?—I, you scoundrel—
(*draws*)

Ra. Will you?—We'll try that—(*brandishes his cudgel*)

Miss Lamb. Hold, Ralph—for heaven's sake, what's the matter?

Ra. Oh, Miss, I have found it all out!—I overheard the whole story in the kitchen—they are all in a plot to murder and ravish you and I and Miss Maria, and keep us here for ever, so come along and let us find out master.

Miss Lamb. Impossible!

Epi. Impossible, indeed, Miss, the fool's drunk.

Ra. Drunk! no, nor mad neither, and I will have you out, Miss, or die for it.

Epi. That you shall, villain!—(*pushes at him*)

Ra. Nay, you have mistaken your man, I believe—
(*disarms Epicene, and knocks him down*)

Epi. Help! murder! help!

Ra. Get up again, you shall have fair play.

Epi.—(*on the ground*)—Curse your play—help! murder! help!

Ra. I fancy you'll not be in a hurry to meddle with a bit of Yorkshire stuff again.

Enter Lord PROMISE and Servants.

L. Pro. What's the meaning of all this noise and violence?
Ra.

THE MACARONI:

Ra. Ask him there, he has more reason to tell you than I.

Epi. By all that's devilish, Promise, that barbarian had nigh put an end to my being—Keep him off till I get away—I thought him a fool, but if ever I am again deceived, may I suffer tenfold what I have done now! *Exit.*

Miss Lamb. Oh, my Lord, I beg you may unfold this mystery, my servant says there is a plot formed to detain us here.

L. Pro. There is, Madam—Nay, start not—'tis time to undeceive you—I have now no interest in letting you continue longer in your error—Therefore view every object in its proper light—

Miss Lamb. Gracious goodness! where will this end!

L. Pro. This house you are close confined in, without a possibility of escape—As a confirmation, advance, Madam, no longer Lady Fanny Promise, but Miss Spence for the future.

Ra. Ay, I thought what it would all come to—I'll be hanged if I did not.

Miss Lamb. I am so overwhelm'd with surprise and astonishment, that I know not what to say.

L. Pro. Miss Lambton, you are safe for the present, that lady will attend you into another room—As for this champion who signalised himself so valiantly in your defence, he may be troublesome,—convey him into the street, he'll improve his talent, and meet with plenty of adventures there.

Ra. Ay, but two words to that bargain—you must have my leave first.

Miss Lamb. Stop, Ra'ph—Surely, my Lord, my servant's fidelity ought not to subject him to ill usage. I will rely upon your honour for my safety here, and hope you will extend it to him.

L. Pro. Miss Lambton, I pity your confusion, and will not stay to increase it—Dismiss your fears—Let your servant retire—he shall not be molested—and you have my honour for your protection. *[Exit.]*

Ra. Bye, Miss, if there be law or justice in England, you shan't stay long here.

Exeunt Ralph and Servants.

Miss

Miss Lamb. For heaven's sake, tell me, is my sister in this house?

Miss Spen. She is, Madam.

Miss Lamb. May I not see her, pray?

Miss Spen. Not at present, Madam; but don't let that disturb you—I can assure you she is well and safe.

Miss Lamb. Does my father know where we are?

Miss Spen. I am sorry, Madam, I am not permitted to answer your questions to your satisfaction.

Miss Lamb. What will become of us!—Thus are my dreams of happiness banished—The enraptured scenes my fancy drew existed but in imagination—now in their stead, each way I turn around, nought present themselves but shame, despair, and infamy! [Exeunt

A C T IV.

S C E N E, *Epicene's House.*

EPICENE, WILVILLE, and Sir HARRY TEMPLE.

Epi. **M**Y dear Wilville, I am very much obliged to you for this visit, I intended calling on you in a few days.

Wil. On me; for what, pray?

Epi. Psha! a trifle—There's a subscription amongst a few of us men of taste to raise ten thousand pounds, to divide between three Italian singers and two capital French dancers, to be invited over for that purpose next winter. That sum, with what the managers can give, benefits, and a few trifling presents, will enable them to live tolerably genteel, and oblige foreigners to confess that no nation out-does us in generosity to strangers—Will you make one?

Wil. I can't say that I have the least inclination, and must think half the sum bestow'd on natives of merit and character, would be infinitely more laudable.

Epi. May I renounce every thing that's foreign if I think so—for in my opinion, a man cannot give a greater proof of the remains of old English barbarism, than by encouraging natives, let their merit be ever so deserving.

48 THE MACARONI.

serving.—'Tis as great a vulgarism, and as much out of fashion, as relieving the poor of the parish one lives in.

Wil. I shan't dispute the matter with you now, having business, to us, of much greater moment—You know Lord Promise?

Epi. Who, George?—perfectly, few know him better—He just now parted from me.—

Wil. As I guess'd—(to Temple)—Did he mention what occasion'd his return to town so soon?

Epi. Oh, now I suspect what you are about—You want to share the spoil—Ay, I know the whole story—Two damn'd fine girls he brought up with him. When he's tired, I suppose, he intends introducing them on the town.

Tem. The town, Sir!—That the villain dares not.

Epi. Sir!

Wil. Hold, Temple, restrain the impetuosity of your temper.

Epi. Confound my intellects! if there is not some mystery in this affair!

Tem. Yes, Sir, there is a mystery which you must unravel, or I shall have recourse to disagreeable methods to oblige you.

Epi. Tom, is your friend apt to be lunatic?—For bubble me at Arthur's, if I understand a syllable he says.

Tem. No trifling, Sir; inform me where the ladies are this instant, or give me immediate satisfaction.

(draws)

Epi. Upon my soul, Sir! I'll give you every reasonable satisfaction you can desire—But for fighting you must excuse me, as I think it damn'd unreasonable.

Wil. Put up! here comes Promise in right time to answer for himself.

Enter LORD PROMISE.

L. Pro. Epicene! I want to—Who the devil are these! (aside)

Tem. I suppose you are Lord Promise?

L. Pro. I am, Sir—Give me leave to demand your name?

Tem. Temple.

L. Pro. I have not the honour of knowing you.

Tem.

A COMEDY.

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Tem. I believe we shall be better acquainted before we part.

L. Pro. Very possible.

Tem. Give me leave to ask, my Lord, what you have done with the Lambton Family?

L. Pro. The Lambton Family!

Tem. Yes, my Lord, 'tis a plain question, and requires an immediate answer.

L. Pro. First, Sir, let me know who you are, that in this peremptory manner demand it?

Tem. One that is determin'd to make you render a strict account of them.

L. Pro. Indeed!—I will then—They are under my protection.

Tem. Restore them directly to their liberty.

L. Pro. I will not.

Tem. You shall.

L. Pro. Who dares attempt to make me?

Tem. I!—(drawing)

Wil. And I!

L. Pro. What! do you intend to assassinate me?
But were you arm'd an hundred fold thus I defy you—
(draws)

Wil. No, my Lord, I scorn the thought.

Epi. Gentlemen! for heaven's sake, be calm!—
What the devil's the matter?—Will nothing content you but cutting one another's throats!—I'm sure if you had the aversion to blood I have, you'd be peaceable enough.

Wil. Give up the ladies, my Lord.

L. Pro. You shall have my life first.

Will. You must defend it well, or I will—Meet me to-morrow morning at six in the park, there to decide our differences.

L. Pro. Depend upon me.

Tem. No, 'tis I who have most reason, and must insist on satisfaction first.

L. Pro. Patience, Gentlemen!—One at a time—
Let me dispatch one first, and then I shall chastise the insolence of the other at my leisure.

L.

WIL.

Tem.

Wil. Be not too sure—Meet me with a second at the time appointed.

L. Pro. May an eternal stigma brand my name if I disappoint you!

Tem. Till then farewell! *Exeunt Tim. and Wil.*

Epi. By all that's terrible! I am glad they are gone, for I was cursedly afraid they wou'd have turn'd their fury upon me.

L. Pro. Who are these mettlesome sparks?

Epi. I know but one of them, Wilville—The other fiery one, I believe, is Sir Harry Temple.

L. Pro. I have heard of them both, but cannot imagine by what unlucky accident they came to the knowledge of these girls—Epicene, I am going to do you great honour.

Epi. Well let's hear.

L. Pro. You shall be my second in this affair.

Epi. Sink me into everlasting oblivion, if I will!

L. Pro. You cannot be in earnest?

Epi. I am, by all that's serious!

L. Pro. What's your reason?

Epi. George, you are a man of courage, and these affairs may be an amusement to you—I, on the contrary, have an aversion to a sword out of its scabbard, much more to its being lodg'd in my body.

L. Pro. Then you positively refuse?

Epi. If ever I draw a sword again, after my late disaster, except it be to break a lamp, frighten a waiter, or pink an old woman, where I am sure my courage will not be put to the trial, may I never re-taste the life-giving air of the continent.

L. Pro. You are a contemptible fellow, below my anger—*(going)*

Epi. Hearkee, Promise, another word of comfort, Major Standfield is in town—What, fight him too?

L. Pro. Very possible—I confess I have work enough upon my hands at present—But there is no retreating, and I dare do any thing but think.

Exit L. Pro.

Epi. May I be despis'd by every person of fashion, if this fighting, even when there's a reasonable occasion, is not the most ridiculous thing in nature!

Enter

A COMEDY.

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Enter SERVANT.

Ser. A lady below stairs, Sir, desires to see you.

Epi. A lady to see me!—Who is she?

Ser. I can't tell, Sir.

Epi. *Qu'elle entre*—Shew her up—

Exit Ser.

What business can a lady possibly have with me?—

Here she comes—Umph!—Veil'd—a foreigner
by her air.

Enter Miss CLEMENT.

[*She curtsies low, he bows obsequiously.*]

Epi. *Vous plat il de vous assoir.* Madam, your most obedient. Please to be seated. I think myself greatly honour'd by this visit. Pray, may I have the favour of knowing what occasion'd it?

Miss Cle. Oh! Sir!

Epi. Madam!

Miss Cle. Pity my confusion—and—and—

Epi. And what, Madam?

Miss Cle. Spare the blushes which force themselves even thro' this veil of shame!

Epi. *Ab Bella Donzella.* Heyday! A fine girl by all that's delicate, and confoundedly in love with me, or I am greatly mistaken!—(*aside*) Compose yourself, my dear, you have nothing to be alarm'd at—May I be electrified by your charms, if I am not a man of the nicest honour. Withdraw that cloud, and throw yourself wholly on my protection.

Miss Cle. O! these well-known sounds! But I will rely on your generosity, and reveal my hapless story. Behold this face—(*unveiling*)—then judge of my unhappy destiny!

Epi. Whither does this tend to!

Miss Cle. Think how severe must be my reflections, when, impelled by love, I forsake relations, friends, country, every tender tie of nature and affection, and sacrifice them all for your dear, dear sake!

E 2

Epi.

Epi. For mine, Madam?—May I be offer'd up a victim on the altar of Venus, if I comprehend the meaning of all this!

Miss Cl. Do you not know me then?

Epi. Never saw you before, to my knowledge—strike me blind if I did!

Miss Cl. Then I am irremediably undone!—Unkind Epicepe! thus to slight a maid who adores you.

Epi. Pray madam, where do you say I have had that pleasure?

Miss Cl. Have not you been in Italy?

Epi. I have.

Miss Cl. Were you not intimate at Pisa with the most noble family of Bentivolio?

Epi. I was, Madam.

Miss Cl. Do you not remember they were once visited by their niece, Julia?—I am that unhappy maid—At first sight I lov'd, and time has only served to confirm me in my hopeless flame—I wrote, but virgin-modesty forbade sending it—At last, hearing of your return to England, the long-suppress'd passion grew too violent to be conceal'd—I resolv'd to follow you—escap'd from my friends—brav'd all the perils of so long a voyage, and am now come to cast my self at your feet, there to receive the reward of my constancy, or, at once, put an end to my sufferings.—(*kneels*)

Epi. I am petrified with astonishment!—Rise, Madam.—

Miss Cl. Not till your cruel heart is softened!—By letters from a friend, who was privy to my flight, I am inform'd my brother, to whose care I was entrusted on my parents death, has traced my steps to England, nay, is this very moment in London, in search of me, perhaps entering this house, when, such is his impetuous temper, and refin'd notions of honour, that your life will be in danger from his resentment, and immediate death must be my portion.

Epi. What an unlucky affair this is!—Rise, for heaven's sake, Madam!

Miss Cl. Never—here will I cling 'till I've won you to pity me!

Clement

Clement—(within)—'Tis false!—I know she's here, and will have vengeance!

Miss Cle. Oh, gracious!—my brother's voice—What will be the consequence?

Epi. The devil it is!—Let me entreat you to rise,

Miss Cle. No, cruel, obdurate man!

Enter CLEMENT.

Cle. Confusion!—then my fears are true!—Have I at last found thee, thou shame to thy sex?—As for you, villain, draw, and defend your unworthy life.

(draws)

Epi. Hold, Sir, I beseech you hold!—May I be condemn'd to everlasting infamy, if I am not entirely innocent in this affair!

Cle. Innocent!—but I waste time in parlying with such a wretch—draw, or this instant is your last.

Epi. Help! murder! help!

Cle.—(presenting a pistol)—Another such word, and you are a dead man.

Epi. I'm afraid I am a dead man indeed—For pity's sake, Madam, convince your brother of his mistake.

Miss Cle. Alas, Sir! what can I say?—He will believe nothing from me; you had best own the truth.

Cle. I see your guilt confounds you—Is this the grateful return you make to such unmerited acts of hospitality and kindness?—to seduce the niece of so noble a house—a house that prides itself on the purity of its blood, and the number of princes allied to it. Could not the largeness of her fortune tempt you to demand her honourably in marriage, without having recourse to such base methods?

Epi. Eternal stupefaction seize me, if I am not so surpriz'd at this whole affair, that I have not power to answer.

Miss Cle. Hard-hearted Epicene, so long to resist the entreaties of one that loves as I do—Accept my hand and fortune—perhaps my brother kindly will forgive all errors past.

Cle. Well, Sir, what say you to that?—now I'll put your honour to the utmost proof—If I oblivionize all former failings, are you willing to do her justice?

Epi. Really, Sir, if you'll allow me to speak without offending you, I must say that this whole transaction is a perfect riddle to me—for if I knew any thing of you, her, or her honour, 'till this instant, may I be confin'd and embalm'd alive!

Cle. Then since you trifle, your doom is seal'd.

Epi. —*Aspettate un momento!*—Will nothing else content you but my marrying this lady?

Cle. Nothing.

Epi. You are sure you have an unconquerable affection for me?—*(to Miss Clement)*

Miss Cle. I think I have given sufficient proofs of it.

Epi. Curse your proofs, and you too, my dear—*(aside)*—You promise, if I marry this lady, I shall possess her fortune, which you say is ample?—*to the brother)*

Cle. Without doubt.

Epi. And you, Madam, promise, that immediately after marriage you will, according to the present fashionable mode, provide yourself with a Cicelbeo?

Miss Cle. You may depend upon it.

Epi. Some comfort that—*(aside)*—I shall be permitted to reside in any part of Italy I please, no matter how far distant from my lady here—*(to the brother)*

Cle. Nothing more reasonable.

Epi. As I shall give you an unlimited liberty, Madam, to have what friends you please at your *petite suppers*, or elsewhere, you, on your part, promise not to take it ill if in public or private I always treat you with the polite coldness and indifference of a husband?

Miss Cle. O, by no means, I do not wish to appear particular, and I am sensible that hardly any thing but the name of marriage exists now.

Epi. Nor you, Sir, when the harmless frolic takes you, be for cutting my throat again?

Cle. Umph!—Why, on my sister's account, I shall forego that pleasure.

Epi.

Epi. Since the devil will have me married, I think I could not have had more reasonable terms.

Cle. Give me your hand, now I find you are a man of honour.

Epi. Oh, zounds! I had forgot—I am engaged already.

Cle. How, Sir?

Epi. I am, by all that's miserable!

Cle. Very well, Sir—you know the consequence.

(laying his hand on his sword)

Epi. What an unfortunate creature am I!—But hear me—I am already engag'd to marry another lady, or forfeit thirty thousand pounds.

Cle. A trifle!—forfeit it.

Epi. My fortune will not enable me.

Cle. My sister's shall—Come since I find words will not bind you, stronger ties shall—sit down, write your consent to marry my sister, under penalty of losing your whole estate.

Epi. Dear Sir, this is superlatively cruel!

Cle. No alternative—this or that——

Epi. O that I durst fight!—Well, I must submit—*(sits down to write)*—Your name, Madam.

Cle. What, don't you know that already?

Epi. No, curse me if I do!

Miss Cle. Julia Bentivolio.

Epi. Julia Bentivolio—*(writes)*—Umph—umph—there, Sir,—will that satisfy you?

Cle.—*(reads)*—I promise—umph—marry Julia Bentivolio—forfeiture whole fortune John Epicene—ay, ay, this will do—Now, sister, I give you leave to embrace your Husband.

Epi. Husband! What harmony in the name!

(aside)

Miss Cle.—*(embracing Epicene)*—With rapture do I fold the darling of my wishes!

Epi. Zounds! my dear, not so violent in your embraces!—'tis the most unfashionable thing in nature.

Cle. I am sorry to interrupt your bliss, but, Julia, you must retire with me, if the ardency of your passion will allow you to live a few hours without her.

(to Epicene)

Epi.

56 THE MACARONI:

Epi. Wou'd I had never seen her!—(*aside*)

Cle. I expect, Sir—you'll give immediate orders for the solemnization of your nuptials—and not delay your happiness by unnecessary preparations, I kindly intend to celebrate them this evening.

Miss Cle. Now, brother, you are kind indeed!—
Adieu, my best beloved! *Exeunt.*

Epi. Adieu, my future torment!—Married!—no, I'll hang myself out of the way, and at once prevent my troubles!—And yet I have not the heart to deprive the world of such a pattern of elegance and dress—What, if I dispute this consent at law, as forc'd and illegal?—yes, and perhaps have myself run thro' the body before it's determin'd—No, I must be married—devilish hard luck!—Oh, my unfortunate stars!—to what a dilemma am I reduced—either to fight or marry. *Exit.*

SCENE, another Apartment in Epicene's House.

Enter Lord PROMISE, and Miss SPENCE.

L. Pro. Come, no more whining—have not I agreed to the sisters being together at your request? what wou'd you be at?—is there any harm done to them?

Miss Spen. No, but how long will they remain so?

L. Pro. As long as I am master of my passions, not a bit longer—I think I have had an uncommon share of patience in this affair—for such a perverse obstinate baggage I never before met with.

Miss Spen. Happy wou'd our sex be, if all, like her, were proof against the false attacks of perjur'd, faithless men.

L. Pro. Better as it is, child—You wou'd then be too near perfection for us mere frail mortals to approach—Go, go, imitate your betters, think of repentance when you are past the power of sinning.

Exit Miss Spence.

Enter VARNISH.

Well Varnish, our schemes hitherto have proved abortive

tive—You are almost preach'd into a reformation by a grey-headed old man—and I have been fairly foiled by a green girl. What a couple of cursed fools! This conscience is a plaguy troublesome companion.

Var. Ah, my Lord, we never can do any good while we listen to it.

L. Pro. You must go to Mr Lambton again—tempt him once more—offer any terms you please—tell him the deed is done—try, if possible, to persuade him to write to his daughter that he approves of it—that may go a great way with her—about it directly. I shall wait your return before I attempt any thing further.

Var. How if I don't succeed?

L. Pro. Ask me no questions, Varnish—I am almost distracted. Sure never was so strange a compound of love, libertinism, generosity, and honour!

Exeunt.

SCENE *Another Apartment in the same House.*

Enter Miss LAMBTON and MARIA.

Mar. I am, however, glad, Charlotte, that your eyes are at last opened to see the fallacy of your wild ideas.

Miss Lamb. Say no more, sister, I am heartily ashamed and mortified already—I begin to see things in a new light, but my experience had like to have cost me dear.

Mar. Enough, my dear; to be sensible of having acted wrong, is pain sufficient to the ingenuous mind, therefore I have done—What do you think of our present situation—for my part—but we are interrupted—

Enter Miss SPENCE.

Miss Spen. Ladies, if you'll please to walk into the next-room, tea is ready.

Mar. Excuse us, Madam; in the present perturbation

bation of our minds, refreshment is not worth a thought.

Miss Spen. I am sensible, ladies, the part I have acted in this affair must make me appear odious in your eyes, as it has contemptible in my own, yet, if you will but hear me——

Miss Lamb. Too much have we heard already, to be any longer impos'd upon.

Miss Spen. Believe me, I do not mean it.

Mar. Oh, vice! what power hast thou attain'd, when thou wear'st the semblance that virtue us'd to pride in!——A form like yours, surely, never was design'd to be an instrument in a scheme so detestable.

Miss Spen. Abhor'd be the hour I ever was!

Mar. If I can read aright, you are not one of those who are harden'd in the ways of guilt——Your appearance speaks you sprung from parents who would hide their heads in shame at your unhappy conduct——Have you unwarily deviated from the paths of virtue? add not to your crimes by endeavouring to make others equally wretched.

Miss Spen. What shall I say to gain belief?——Appearances, I own, are strong against me——but black as I may seem, hear but my melancholy story, and then refuse me pity if you can.

Miss Lamb. Proceed, and be assured we wish to find it so.

Miss Spen. Behold before you the only, and once prided daughter, of an ancient happy couple, as Love and Hymen ever yet united——to myself alone I owe my ruin——unmindful of their precepts, and trusting in the force of my imaginary charms, I fell unthinkingly in the fatal snare laid by the most artful of men——Lord Promise triumph'd over my innocence——To conceal my shame, I left my tender parents, and ventur'd into the world destitute of fortune, friends, or virtue!

Mar. Unhappy consequences of one false step!

Miss Spen. Fatally so, indeed!——Deserted, despis'd, and hateful to myself, I cou'd only have recourse to the author of my ruin——for a while he behav'd with
tenderness,

tenderness, cool indifference succeeded, and I was soon oblig'd to give place to newer objects—What cou'd I do? my dependence was solely upon him—I bore my fate with resignation, conscious of having deserv'd it, but when he oblig'd me to act a part in your deception, my remorse grew too violent to be stifled—Thank heav'n, he has hitherto fail'd in his designs—and I am now come with a determin'd resolution either to effect your deliverance, or share your fate while you remain here.

Mar. Then we have still some hopes, and Providence has not yet deserted us!—But what's to be done? how get from these unhalow'd walls?

Miss Spen. That will be a difficult task, I am afraid, guarded as you are by his watchful emissaries.

Miss Lamb. Pray, do you know Sir Harry Temple?

Miss Spen. Not in the least, Madam.

Mar. Nor a Mr. Wilville?

Miss Spen. I can't recollect that I do.

Mar. Nay, if you did, 'twould be to no purpose, they, alas! are many miles from hence—all hopes of relief from them are vain—But do you know Lord Promise's Sister?

Miss Spen. I have a slight knowledge of her.

Mar. I believe she will be the only probable means of our delivery—Suppose you throw yourself upon her generosity—confess your whole affecting story, and relate our cruel detention—I think, if her breast be not totally void of every feminine virtue, she will pity you, and protect us.

Miss Spen. Alas, Madam, I scarce can gather courage to approach her, yet to release you, and in some measure atone for past offences, I wou'd submit to any thing, however humiliating.

Mar. Then let me persuade you to go thither.

Miss Spen. Well, Madam, I will.

Mar. But this instant—consider our situation—a moment's delay may put it out of her power to relieve us.

Miss Spen. I'll go directly—in the mean time pray take a dish of tea, and recruit your exhausted spirits.

Mar. You'll return as soon as possible.

Miss

Miss Spen. Depend upon it.

Mar. Come, sister, let us endeavour to compose ourselves, and call to mind that from adversity oft spring our choicest blessings.

Exeunt.

SCENE, *Varnish's House.*

Enter Mr. LAMBTON.

Mr. Lamb. My daughter not yet return'd, nor any news of Lord Promise!—I am almost distracted!

Enter VARNISH.

Oh, Sir, you are come—well—now I hope my fears are over—Where are my children?

Var. Safe, Sir: very safe, I assure you.

Mr. Lamb. My blessing on you for the news!—May I not expect them home soon?

Var. Why, Sir, they have been so agreeably entertain'd since they went abroad, that you must not be impatient if they don't return quite so soon as you expected.

Mr. Lamb. My poor girls!—they have indeed seen very little of the world, nor have they any thing to recommend them to the company they are in, except it be their innocence and virtue.

Var. Really, Mr. Lambton, you have reason to be proud of them—they charm every one with their behaviour—Lady Fanny loves them already like sisters, nay, she says it will be their own faults, if they do not always rank so in her esteem, as her happiness is wound up in their's.

Mr. Lamb. Her goodness is too much, too much for such unworthy objects—for how is it possible they can contribute to her happiness?

Var. I have told you, Sir, how violently fond my Lord is of Miss Maria—every minute increases his passion, and it is now arriv'd at such a pitch, that he cannot live an hour without her.

Mr.

Mr. Lamb. Live an hour without her ! You cannot mean it, sure ?

Var. Upon my word, Sir, I do. You are a happy man, Mr. Lambton, to be father to so beautiful a daughter !—make yourself perfectly easy—your fortune is made for ever.

Mr. Lamb. Oh, wou'd to heav'n I cou'd ! For goodness sake, Sir, explain your dark ambiguous meaning.

Var. I am come, Sir, to congratulate you on the happy change of your affairs. Lord Promise has already obtain'd a vacant place of two hundred pounds a year for you ; Miss Maria has five hundred pounds yearly settled upon her during life, besides house, equipage, servants, and——

Mr. Lamb. How ! hold, for the love of charity. On what conditions were all these things obtain'd ?

Var. Conditions ! none, Sir. Lord Promise is too generous to exact any ; all he desires in return, is to be assur'd of Miss Maria's unalterable love and constancy.

Mr. Lamb. Merciful powers ! how is my old agonizing heart torn by a thousand different emotions ! If you have any humanity in you, answer me truly : Are my Lord's designs upon my daughter honourable, or not ?

Var. Entirely, Sir, upon my credit.

Mr. Lamb. I wish I may find them so.

Var. 'Tis true, it is not in his power to marry her ; what of that, you cannot surely be so weak and blind to your own interest, as to stand on mere punctilio ? In every other respect she will be more than his wife—and as to——

Mr. Lamb. Stop your licentious tongue ! nor dare to insult the virtuous poverty of my white hairs !

Var. Insult, Sir ! the farthest thing in the world from my thoughts. Can you term it insult to be at once seated above the——

Mr. Lamb. Thou pander ! look on me well ; consider whom you tempt ; a father ! then think, whether worlds ought to bribe me to deviate a moment from my duty.

Var. But, allowing your sentiments their utmost weight,

weight, will you not patiently bear an evil which cannot be removed?

Mr. Lamb. What, more mystery! pray, pray explain yourself, and let me know the worst of my unhappy fate.

Var. Miss Maria, Sir, not so insensible of my Lord's favours, has kindly rewarded him with every return in her power to bestow.

Mr. Lamb. Then all is over! break heart-strings, break at once, and end this miserable being!—(*walking about disorder'd*) Yet, 'tis, it must be false! Her mind pure end spotless as new-drifted snow, cou'd not so soon be tainted. No, my child, you cou'd not, wou'd not sell your innocence, nor part with that jewel of inestimable price!

Var. To what end, Sir, shou'd I now impose on you?—Your daughter has accepted of my Lord's love and tenderness; she now has sent me to request you'd make yourself easy at what has happen'd, and, as soon as your first emotions are over, will be glad to see you; in the mean time, if you will write her word that you are satisfied with her conduct, and happy, she will be compleatly so.

Mr. Lamb. Tantalize not such a wretch as me with the name of happiness! Oh, cruel, cruel girl, thus to pierce the bosom of a tender, doating father! May every—no, I will not curse her—curse, where I so many thousand times have bless'd—'twould be unnatural—Let then the never-ceasing sting of conscience at last work her to repentance. Where is she? lead me to her, that if she has any spark of virtue yet remaining in her, I may awaken it. (*going*)

Var. Hold, Sir; that at present is impossible.

Mr. Lamb. Impossible, Sir! What power shall hinder me?

Var. I must, Sir; in compassion to your mind thus agitated, I must,

Mr. Lamb. Compassion, said'st thou?—if thou hast the least tincture of it in thy composition, have pity on a wretched father, borne down with age and sorrows—torture me not in this manner, 'tis too much for my feeble

ble

ble nature long to support—let me but see my children, and I shall be easier.

Var. To-morrow you shall.

Mr. Lamb. To-morrow's an age to one in doubt like me—Stranger as I am, I'll find my way to Lady Fanny's.

Var. Your efforts are vain—this house you are confin'd in, till you have a proper sense of my Lord's kindness, and agree to his proposals—Your daughters, tho' very safe, are not at his sister's, nor can your utmost diligence find them out—I'll leave you an hour to consider of this affair—Either accept the offers to make you and your children happy for life, or be oblig'd to return into the country to-morrow morning without them—*(going)*

Mr. Lamb.—*(holding Varnish)*—Stay! for mercy's sake, stay!—Kill me, but do not ask me to be accessory to my children's dishonour! *Exit Var.*

He's gone—O, Charlotte!—Maria!—The comforts of my declining years at once torn from me!—and in such a manner—condemn'd to everlasting infamy—'tis too much!—Unhappy, poor old man! who now will close thy eyes, and receive thy dying blessings? O where are all my dreams of felicity!—those days I hop'd to spend amongst the prattling lipsers of my daughters!—all vanish'd, and real anguish now succeeds—I dare not think—it may be dangerous—*(going)*—Yet, something whispers comfort to my wounded soul—I will, if possible, be patient, and put my confidence in that being who never fails to succour the afflicted heart in the hour of calamity! *Exit.*

A C T V.

SCENE, LADY FANNY PROMISE'S.

Enter Lady FANNY and Miss CLEMENT,

Lady Fan. **H**A! ha! ha!—Upon my word, Lucy, you have manag'd this affair admirably, beyond my expectations—We shall now proceed to the second part of the scene, and if we don't torment him to some purpose, why I am greatly deceived.

Miss Cle. Never fear, I'll second you. But you can't imagine how I'm afflicted with Miss Spence's relation of the Miss Lambtons confinement.

L. Fan. Not more than I am, I assure you; poor girls! I am impatient 'till we go to their relief.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Two Gentlemen, my Lady, Sir Harry Temple and Mr. Wilville, desire to speak to you.

L. Fan. Hey-day! more adventures! Wait on them up—

Exit Ser.

What can they want with me? something relating to my righteous brother, I suppose. I must beg of you, my dear, to retire for a minute or two, and as soon as these gentlemen are gone, we'll proceed to Epicene's together.

Exit Miss Cle.

Enter TEMPLE and WILVILLE.

Tem. Pardon this intrusion, my Lady, which nothing but the nature of our business cou'd excuse.

L. Fan. There needs none, Sir.

Wil. Necessity, Madam, obliges us, after every other method has fail'd, to trouble you. We are in search of two ladies, whom your brother has decoy'd up to town, and by force secretes, spite of our utmost endeavours to find out and release them.

L. Fan.

L. Fan. I was right, I find—*(aside)*—Your search is at an end, Gentlemen, if you mean Mr. Lambton's family, who came to town this morning.

Wil. We do. Is it possible you can have heard of them?

L. Fan. I have, and was contriving means for their deliverance when you came in.

Tem. How fortunate! Dear Lady, let us fly to give them liberty, and prevent the evils they are threatened with.

L. Fan. Hold, Sir; not so fast; trust all to my management, and I'll ensure you success.

Tem. You shall be our tutelar deity on this occasion, only consider our impatience.

L. Fan. I do, therefore will not waste time in useless ceremonies; do you know Epicene?

Wil. Perfectly well.

L. Fan. You must accompany me thither directly, on our way I'll explain every thing, and give you proper instructions how to behave.

Tem. Lead on, Madam, and may our success exceed our wishes.

Exeunt.

SCENE, *Epicene's House.*

Enter EPICENE and Lord PROMISE.

Epi. Strike me deaf at an opera, Promise, if ever I was in such a dilemma before! No, not even in Naples, when that cursed affair happened, which forced me to live a month with Squalitum the burletta singer.

L. Pro. And so the brother absolutely obliged you to sign a contract.

Epi. Absolutely; for, when his sword was drawn, had he insisted on my binding myself to a tobacco planter, to work in his plantations the remainder of my life, I could not have refused him.

L. Pro. What a spiritless dog! Well, but was the Signiora handsome?

Epi. Devilishly so. But what was that to me? Had she the beauty of Venus, the chastity of Diana, and the wisdom of Minerva—all these join'd together cou'd

not have gained her admission into the Coterie, or let me into the secret at the next Newmarket meeting.

L. Pro. Quite the contrary, I believe.

Epi. Of what use are a woman's good qualities then?—If my destiny will have me yoked, give me a fashionable wife, who will raise a man's reputation in the world.

L. Pro. Pray, how is that to be done?

Epi. Only by following the example of every day; eloping before the honey-moon is over; obtaining a divorce—and exalting the happy man to a level with the greatest names of the present age.

L. Pro. Very clever indeed.

Epi. Oh, almost as certain a road to fame as modern patriotism. But I have not told you all my misfortunes. This visit has destroyed an immense deal of happiness I had in petto.

L. Pro. Ay! How so?

Epi. I intended to have cut a distinguishing figure at the next masquerade, in the character of a French milliner.

L. Pro. Which this accident has prevented!

Epi. It has by all that's cruel! For what Guffo cou'd I have, or how cou'd I possibly display my talents under such an embarrassment?

L. Pro. True; the world will sustain an irreparable loss. But what do you think my sister will say to you upon this occasion?

Epi. May I be annihilated! if that does not give me the greatest concern. She's a lady of the nicest discernment, and if she has unalterably fix'd her affections on me, so as to drive her to some act of desperation, I shou'd never forgive myself.

Enter SERVANT.

Ser. Lady Fanny Promise desires to speak with you, my Lord.

L. Pro. Shew her up.

[*Exit Ser.*

Epi. Your sister!—Zounds, what shall I do? I am quite unprepar'd for this rencontre.

L. Pro. Faith, so am I; her coming, I am afraid, bodes

bodes no good to either of us—retire you, and leave me to manage her.

Epi. My dear boy, help me out of this difficulty, and command me to eternity. *[Exit.]*

L. Pro. She has not sure got a hint of what I am about, if she has, I wust shift ground directly.

Enter Lady FANNY and Miss CLEMENT.

L. Fan. Brother, I am glad to see you.

L. Pro. That's more than I can say to you—*[aside]* Sister, your servant—What, my little rogue Clement! I'll lay my life some mischief's on foot now, for no other cause could have brought you both hither.

L. Fan. You are a prophet, brother—Come tell us now whether we shall succeed or no?

L. Pro. Where two women join their heads together, I think they are a match for the grand mischief maker.

L. Fan. Thank you!—You had best take care of yourself—*[aside]*—Pray, where is that pretty gentleman your travelling companion?

L. Pro. Who, Epicene?

L. Fan. The same.

L. Pro. Somewhere in the house, I suppose—Is your business with him?

Miss Cle. It is, and we are come to beg your assistance.

L. Pro. In what?

Miss Cle. Only to plague him a little.

L. Pro. Poor devil! he's pretty well prepar'd to your hand, I assure you

L. Fan. How! has he told you of his whimsical situation?

L. Pro. We were just talking of it when you interrupted us—but, how the deuce came you to know it?

L. Fan. Because I contriv'd it.

L. Pro. You contriv'd it!

L. Fan. Yes—behold the distress'd Lady Julia Benivolio.

L. Pro. Ha! ha! ha!—Upon my soul, a glorious joke! ha! ha!—Is it possible he can be so dup'd? Well, what am I to do?

L. Fan.

L. Fan. Withdraw 'till a convenient time, then appear, and add to his distress, by insisting on the performance of his contract with me.

L. Pro. Ha! ha! ha! excellent!—I understand you—you cou'd not have oblig'd me more highly than by letting me into the secret—ha! ha! ha!—If I don't mortify him——

Miss Cle. Away, then, and send him up—but not the least hint of what we are about.

L. Pro. Not, for the world.

[Exit.

L. Fan. And when that's over, my good brother, I shall take you to task in a manner you little suspect. I think my plans are pretty well laid now, and can hardly fail of success—This confiding in him, lulls him to perfect security.

Miss Cle. Well, what am I to do?

L. Fan. Retire to your brother, but place yourselves within hearing, and when you think your presence necessary, both second me and join in the attack—Stay, take my last orders—when I have done with Epicene, and begun upon my brother, do you march off unperceiv'd, and lead up the reinforcements in regular order.

Miss Cle. Never fear me—This will be a curious piece of generalship.

L. Fan. Ay, girl; and, if we succeed, we shall deserve statues being raised to our memories—march.

Miss Cle. Row, dow! dow! dow! row! dow!

[Exit marching.

L. Fan. Bravo!—mum!——

Enter EPICENE.

Epi. Dear Lady Fanny, this is so great an honour.

L. Fan. And, I am afraid, so unwish'd for——

Epi. Wrong not your own charms so far as to imagine I wish not to devote my whole life to their contemplation.

L. Fan. But it must be at a distance tho' I find—Come, come, Mr. Epicene, 'tis in vain to disguise my unhappy fate, tho', your politeness wou'd gloss it over—be ingenuous, and confess you have not a heart to bestow.

Epi.

Epi. Alas, Lady Fanny, our affections are not to be commanded—if they were, I swear by all that's beautiful, I know not a more deserving object.

L. Fan. O feeble, weak attractions!—they cannot hold in chains the only man I ever wish'd to conquer!

Epi. Upon my soul, this is very distressing!

L. Fan. Yet who can behold that assemblage of every thing noble and manly, without pitying, rather than condemning the violence of my unreturn'd affection.

Epi. Far gone, by all that's affecting?—And yet what a proper sense she entertains of my merit!

(aside)

L. Fan. Not a word to give me hopes! Sure if I lay aside the native modesty of my sex, the object before me will sufficiently justify me to the world—You must, nay, you shall comply.

Epi. Egad, if I don't take care, she may go greater lengths than I desire—*(aside)*—Believe me, Lady Fanny, an unlucky accident has render'd it utterly impossible for me to do you the justice you deserve—norwithstanding I love, nay, adore you more than any of your sex.—*During this speech Miss Clement steals softly in, and at the end takes one of his hands, Lady Fanny the other.]*

Miss Cle. Except me, Mr. Epicene!

Epi. Confusion!—what will become of me!

Miss Cle. Why does my love turn away?—What woman's this, who seems to take an interest in you?

L. Fan. One, Madam, that has a prior claim to you, and is resolv'd to assert it.

Miss Cle. Indeed!—this is some artifice—I see thro' the weak device, and will soon defeat it—brother!

Enter CLEMENT.

Epi. The brother!—this is too much!

Cle. Mr. Epicene, I am very glad to see you.

Epi. I wish with all my heart I could return the compliment.

Cle. I am come rather sooner than I at first intended

ed; but when I consider'd the violence of your passion for my sister, I cou'd no longer retard your happiness.

Epi. You are too good!—too good, upon my soul!

Cle. Well, Sir, shall the ceremony be immediately perform'd?

Epi. If the ceremony at Tyburn was perform'd, I shou'd have a happy riddance from my plagues!

L. Fan. I know not what right, Sir, you, or that lady has to my husband.

Cle. Your husband! How, Sir, are you married to that lady?

Epi. No, Sir—not that I know of.

Cle. Oh, well—are you ready and willing to marry my sister? *[laying his hand on his sword]*

Epi. Very ready, Sir—but cursedly unwilling!

[aside]

L. Fan. Nay, then, I must have recourse to other means. O brother! brother! come and right an injur'd sister.

Enter Lord PROMISE.

L. Pro. My sister! why do you call in this alarming manner?

L. Fan. I'm wrong'd, basely wrong'd, and have not the least hopes of redress, except from you.

Epi. For the love of charity, Promise, come and right me—'tis I have most need of it.

L. Pro. What's the reason of this confusion?—Who are you, Sir?

Cle. Carlino Bentivolio—brother to this lady.

Epi. Ay, George, this is the damn'd fierce Italian who bully'd me so to-day—I wish'd for you then.

L. Pro. Well, sister—to you——

L. Fan. I claim my contract.

L. Pro. You are determin'd to urge your claim?

L. Fan. I am.

L. Pro. Lookee, Epicene, I profess myself your friend.

Epi. A thousand thanks, my dear boy.

L. Pro. And as a proof of my friendship, I will this instant——

Epi. What? what?

L. Pro. Sacrifice you, unless you do my sister justice.

(draws)

Epi.

Epi. Oh, mercy on me!

L. Pro. This moment agree to marry her, or immediate death's your portion.

Epi. I will—I will!

Cle. (drawing) How, Sir, have not you promised this lady that satisfaction?

Epi. Yes, I have, I am distracted between them! Really, gentlemen, I am but a man, if you expect to find me more, you'll be devilishly mistaken. If I can oblige the ladies, I will; only determine between yourselves whether I must marry one or both of them, and I shall obey you.

Cle. I see you are almost below my notice.

Epi. I wish I was entirely so.

L. Pro. I find I must be an umpire in this affair. Come, Epicene, if you wish to be deliver'd from your thralldom, you must make some humiliating concessions.

Epi. Heav'n knows, any thing that's in my power, I will.

L. Pro. In the first place, you must ask pardon of these ladies, and, thro' them, of the whole sex, for the cold unanimated, unworthy ideas, you always entertain'd of those master-pieces of nature.

Epi. I do.

L. Pro. Next, you must acknowledge you have not courage enough to attempt, nor sense sufficient to prize the least of their favours.

Epi. I acknowledge.

L. Pro. You must now say after me——

Epi. Well!

L. Pro. (Epicene repeating after him) I confess that a Macaroni is the most insignificant, insipid, useless, contemptible being, in the whole creation——Very well, you are docile, I find. Lastly you must entirely quit the appearance of such a detpicable species and endeavour to assume the Man.

Epi. That's hard, nay, I am afraid impossible——You may as well bid me shake off my existence.

L. Pro. For shame! Think who you sprung from, a race of hardy, virtuous, conquering Britens, and blush at your own degenerate exotic effeminacy. But
I have

I have done, and be assur'd, my sole motive was to set you up a glass, wherein you might behold a faithful image. As to my sister, I can prevail on her to resign her right in you here, exchange bonds, and never presume to trouble her more.

[They exchange papers]

Epi. NI do, may the combined plagues of Egypt be my portion!

L. Pro. It now only remains to satisfy that lady.

Miss Cle. Which will be easily done, my Lord; here Sir, is your contract, nor cou'd any consideration unite me to so reprehensible a character.

[Gives him the paper]

L. Pro. L. Fan. Cle. Ha! ha! ha!

Epi. Strike me to the antipodes, Madam, if I am not heartily oblig'd to you!

L. Pro. Ha! ha! ha!—Come, 'tis time to drop the mask. Sister, I wish you joy of your deliverance! If I divine aright, you can bestow your hand upon a more worthy object. Clement, take her, take what that foolish puppy had not understanding enough to value.

L. Fan. You are very obliging, brother—and since 'tis so, I own he has deserv'd me—Here, accept my hand; but have a care, if you repent, I shall not so easily forego my claim as I did to that gentleman.

Cle. When I do, may I, like him, be the deserving object of ridicule!

Epi. I am thunderstruck!—what's all this?—is not your name Carlino Bentivolio?

Cle. No, Sir, my name's Clement, at your service.—Ha! ha! ha!

L. Pro. L. Fan. Miss Cle. Ha! ha! ha!

Epi. Nor yours, Madam, Julia Bentivolio?

Miss Cle. Lucy Clement, if you please, Sir—Ha! ha! ha!

Epi. I perceive I have been most egregiously bubbled here—Ladies and Gentlemen, you have been highly diverted at my expence—I own I deserve it, and begin to be my folly—As a proof, give me leave to withdraw for the present, and get perfect in the catechism you were pleas'd to teach me.

L. Fan.

A COMEDY.

23

L. Fan. Stay Mr. Epicure—after your confession, it would be ungenerous to torment you farther—What a great pity 'tis my brother can't be made as sensible of his errors, and reform too!

Miss Clement goes out.
L. Pro. Pray my good sister, what errors would your great wisdom correct?

L. Fan. Only a few trifling ones, brother—such as that humane delight you take in seducing the innocent and unwary of our sex, and those harmless consequences generally attending——

L. Pro. Stop, child, this is no time for such lectures.

L. Fan. The best time in the world, brother, our auditors are friends, and they, I am sure, will excuse my inability.

Epi. Ay, ay, Madam, go on—he never spared me.

L. Fan. In short, your licentiousness is grown to such a pitch, that unless Providence, out of its great goodness, timely interposes and awakens in you a sense of your guilt, you must tremble at its just punishments.

L. Pro. Pshaw! stuff!—have done with this sermonizing.

L. Fan. Patience, brother, I am only beginning.

Epi. Bravo! Lady Fanny!—to him, he begins to flinch already.

L. Fan. But as example enforces precept, give me leave to illustrate my arguments.

[Goes to the side, and returns with Miss Spence]

L. Pro. What can she mean?

L. Fan. Behold, here is one of the many objects whom you have wantonly plung'd into endless misery.

L. Pro. Miss Spence! then I am betray'd, and all's over.

L. Fan. What, confus'd!—cheer up, here are more friends——

Enter the two Miss LAMBTONS.

These are the two ladies you entrusted to my care—you see I can give a very good account of them—they are

THE MACARONI:

are come to return you thanks for your friendly invitation up to town—you may expect the father soon on the same errand.

Epi. Ha! ha! ha!—I believe 'tis my turn to catechise now—Come, ask pardon of these ladies, and of the whole sex, for the loose profligate ideas you always entertain'd of their virtue.

L. Pro. Epicene, you grow troublesome.

Epi. Ha! ha! ha!—Nay, Promise—*[pulling him by the sleeve]*—you was always an apt scholar—say after me—I confess—that a libertine—is the most wicked—dangerous—remorseless—lawless—abandoned being—in the whole creation.

L. Fan. What brother—not a word?

L. Pro. Yes, sister, many—'tis past—the struggle's over, and I will give way to conscience—That I have been a profess'd libertine I own—before you all I own it, but 'tis with the sincerest regret—To atone for past mischiefs is impossible—a patriarchal life wou'd be too short. I have followed an *ignis fatuus*, and am bewilder'd in inextricable paths of error—too late the delusion vanish'd—not even an herculean arm can save me now from sinking.

L. Fan. Courage, brother—we must not presume to set bounds to infinite mercy.

L. Pro. Of you, ladies, who happily fell not in my snares, I entreat forgiveness—I beseech you pardon each offence against you and virtue—To Miss Spence, 'tis not in my power to make atonement in any measure adequate to the wrongs I have done her—What can, shall be done—I know her circumstances, and she may depend upon being provided for in such a manner, as, for the future, to set her above temptation.

Ch. Why, Promise, this is noble—these are genuine fruits of reformation.

L. Fan.—*(Temple and Wilville entering)*—Now, gentlemen, you may appear, and I hope all animosity between you will be no more remembered.

L. Pro. More witnesses of my shame!—they are welcome—I design'd, gentlemen, to have injur'd you in the tenderest point, but heaven providentially interpos'd,

interpos'd, and turn'd, what I intended as the blackest crime, into the means of future blessings.

Wil. Mention it not, my Lord,—the original generous, tho' mis'd heart, when awak'd from its lethargy of vice, oft-times arises more bright and active from its late obscurity.

Mr. Lamb.—(entering)—Where are my children? give me room—I must—I will embrace them!—do I once more fold you in my arms?—no force or fraud shall ever separate us more!

L. Pro. You need not fear it, Sir—I, who alone was author of your ills, shall study to make your life to come one series of continued happiness—Thou good old man, can't thou forgive the wrongs I've done thee?

Mr. Lamb. My Lord, I should ill deserve the name you honour me with, if I could not only forgive, but bless, the worst of enemies, even as I hope myself to be forgiven—and may that power who delights in acts of mercy, further every good and noble thought!

Epi. May I forfeit all pretensions to reformation, if the old gentleman's benignity won't make me, unfashionable as it may appear, visit the inside of a church oftener than I have done.

Mr. Lamb.—(to *Temple and Wilville*)—Gentlemen, I am happy in seeing you here so unexpectedly—to what fortunate accident do I owe this pleasure?

Tem. To the desire alone, Sir, of serving you and these ladies—and lucky as we are in meeting with you, give us leave to hope we may participate in the general joy.

Mr. Lamb. If 'tis in my power you may be assur'd of it.

Tem. We both have lov'd your daughters some time—you must have observ'd the particularity of our behaviour, as we wish'd not to conceal it—our families and fortunes are well known to you—since we came hither, they have owned we were not indifferent to them—perhaps a father's authority might—

Mr. Lamb. No, Gentlemen, my children shall never be commanded into marriage—'tis my duty to advise, but not compel them.

L. Fan. No great compulsion, I'll answer, Mr. Lambton—they'd cry their eyes out to be refus'd.

Mr. Lamb. What say you, girls?

Mar. I own, Sir, Mr. Wilville's good qualities have made an impression on me never to be erased, and, authorized by you, I will readily give my hand where my heart is irrevocably engag'd.

L. Fan. That's a good girl—Come Miss Lambton, don't let your younger sister out-do you.

Miss Lamb. The dread that my past behaviour is inexcusable, has hitherto kept me silent—I am conscious of its impropriety, and have nothing to offer in defence, but my simplicity and ignorance of the world.

Tem. You cannot offer a better plea to the thinking heart.

Mr. Lamb. Well gentlemen, if you can condescend to match with girls whose virtue is all their portion—

Wil. Name it not, Sir—As the beginning of our love was disinterested so shall be the completion—They want no addition of fortune, and are in themselves treasures beyond what imperial greatness could bestow.

L. Pro. Nobly spoken—and now, Mr. Lambton, give me leave to make such a provision for you, as shall testify a proper sense of my past conduct, and in which I am certain my father on his return will readily concur.

Epi. How devilish generous this love and honour makes people!

Mr. Lamb. But yet I miss a faithful servant, who ought to share his master's joy.

L. Pro. He well deserves it—be it my business to reward him, and for ever discard those minions of vice who too long have prey'd upon me.

L. Fan. Now, brother, you have with a truly noble spirit acknowledg'd every failing you have been charged with—can you have constancy to persevere?

L. Pro. I think so.

L. Fan. Nay, you have a severe trial yet to come—a fiery ordeal—but you must endure it before you can be perfect.

L. Pro

A COMEDY.

77

L. Pro. That I can never be—but in the name of wonder, what new mystery have you yet to unravel?

L. Fan. Turn your eyes this way, and view the man who once was proud to call you friend.

Enter Major STANDFIELD.

L. Pro. Major Standfield!—'tis too much!—I cannot, dare not stand his presence.

L. Fan. You can, and must, brother—he is not come to hurt your mind with keen reproaches, but rather to pour the healing balm of peace into the corroding wounds of vice, which long have rankled in your breast.

L. Pro. No, no, it cannot be—I do not hope forgiveness—Major, I bare my breast—there is no way but this to expiate guilt like mine.

Maj. There is, my Lord, a nobler way—a way which earth and heaven must both approve—prepare yourself for more wonder—*[Goes out and returns with his daughter leading her little boy]*

L. Pro. O, all ye powers! what is it I behold?—Can it be real, or is it the phantom of my Eugenia, risen from the dead, to set my crimes in full array before me?—I must, I will embrace it!—Ha! it sinks!—help to support her—look down, ye bright celestial inhabitants of glory, and restore this injur'd saint to life!

Miss Stand.—*[recovering]*—Oh, my Lord, these wild effusions of a heart o'erpower'd with love and tenderness speak well the unrestrain'd dictates of its owner,—but I must curb its transports—Look here, another object demands your fondest care.

L. Pro. Can it be possible such happiness is in store for me! am I a father too?

Maj. You are, my Lord, if you'll own the obligation.

L. Pro. Own it! ay, prouder of that title than to be hail'd an Indian monarch!—My cherib! my little cherib! receive a father's first embraces!—Now, my Eugenia, we are met, never to be separated more.

Miss Stand.

Miss Stand. Hear me, my Lord—That I have lov'd you, say, that I shall continue to do so while life keeps her seat, is the only excuse I can offer for my frailty—I have hitherto obey'd my father's will, permit me now to follow the dictates of my own—Had I my innocence, and was mistress of the untold treasures of the east—all that the sun surveys in his diurnal round, you should be master of it—but cover'd with infamy as I am, tho' you cou'd raise me to the utmost pinnacle where star-crown'd virtue ought to sit—a conscious pride wou'd forbid the exaltation.

Epi. Zounds! a charming girl! what a pity 'tis she should be lost to the world.

L. Pro. Is then my dream of bliss destroy'd?—my new-found blessing, turn that way, and intercede with your inexorable mother—tell her my peace here and hereafter depends upon her receiving my penitential vows.

Miss Stand. My Lord, the honey-dropping tongue of seraphic eloquence cannot move me to change my purpose—I have now attain'd my utmost wishes, to see you thoroughly sensible of your failings, and wou'd fain retire to that peaceful cottage which this event has drawn me from, there with my little rose-lipp'd comforter, pass my future hours in undisturbed solitude.

L. Fan. Press her no farther, brother—leave it to time—when she is sufficiently assured of your steady perseverance in the paths of rectitude, the love she acknowledges for you may probably induce her at last to reward your constancy.

Mr. Lamb. Now, Lady Fanny, with your leave, we'll retire and celebrate the surprising events of this happy day; events which must fully manifest to every beholder, that however virtue may for a time be oppress'd and held in durance, yet is it always the peculiar and never-deserted favourite, of rewarding Providence.

F I N I S.

EPILOGUE.

Written by a FRIEND;

And spoken by Mr. CRESSWICK, in the

Character of the MACARONI.

*It matters not, good folks, say what you will,
Approve or disapprove our author's skill,
'Tis sure there must be Macaronies still.
For phantom-fashion leads us by the nose,
And makes us die for every whim she shows.
A coat, a club, a feather, will engage
A genius of the Bon Ton for an age;
Like Newton's system, bear the inventor's name,
And rank him higher in the lists of fame.
In English garb, we know, plain common-sense
To modish understanding gives offence;
And modest merit, if perchance one meets,
How awkward creeps the stranger thro' the streets!
Whilst fan-tail'd folly, with Parisian air,
Commands the homage sense alone shou'd share.
The world's so macaronied grown of late,
That common mortals now are out of date;
No single class of men this merit claim,
Or high, or low, in faith 'tis all the same:
For see the Doctor, who with sapient wig,
Gold cane, grave pbiz, ere while hal'd more than big,
With France's foretop decorates his face,
Prescribes and dresses with macaronied grace;
Then swears aloud he hates all formal stuff,
For gravity in practice is a puff.*

The

PROLOGUE

The soldier, once that hardly for of arms,
 Whose soul was rous'd, was fir'd with war's alarms,
 Forgets the eminence on which he stood,
 Whence his country call'd, how bail'd his blood!
 He quits the glory his forefathers won,
 And leaves his nation's alienated son.
 Still lower he is fall for once, and pop
 One head into a wretched Barber's shop;
 What the result? or what behold we there?
 A set of Macaronies weaving hair.
 Such general folly your attention claims,
 And justice here at reformation aims;
 On us this night exerts its utmost skill,
 Corrects, reforms, and moulds us to its will.
 Ye gentle fair, wou'd but such triflers view
 Less in their pretty selves, much more in you,
 Wou'd they to sense and virtue bend the knee,
 Leave to its native soil all foppery,
 Nature wou'd cease to weep—The godlike plan
 Wou'd thrive, in due, un-muddy rain,
 With hospitable father old British truth
 Wou'd warm your beauty, and adorn our youth.

